

SPLENDID LIVES SERIES

JOHN HOWARD

the Prisoner's Friend



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COOPER

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THE HOWARD STATUE AT BEDFORD.

JOHN HOWARD

THE PRISONER'S FRIEND

His Home Life and His Work

BY

L. ORMAN COOPER

AUTHOR OF

"JOHN BUNYAN, THE GLORIOUS DREAMER"

ETC. ETC.



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AUTHOR'S NOTE



IN every biography of the great philanthropist, John Howard, the magnitude of his work has overshadowed and dwarfed his personality. This is as he would have wished it to be.

In these days, however, there is a keen desire to know something of the inner lives of our celebrated men. For this reason I have garnered many details of the home life of John Howard, and have tried to furnish a faithful and intimate picture of the Prisoner's Friend in the more private relations of life.

LINA ORMAN COOPER.

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JOHN HOWARD

CHAPTER I.

THE CHILD.

His Birth—The Foster-Parent—The Village Home.



RATHER more than a century and a half ago, between the years 1724 and 1726, a baby boy was born to a worthy London tradesman and his wife. September was laying her golden finger on tree and hedgerow when he first saw the light, but whether his birth was in Clapton, Hackney, Enfield, or Smithfield is not definitely known.

The monument put up in St. Paul's "to the memory of this extraordinary man," states that he was born in Hackney. Dr. Aiken, one of his earliest friends and his most accurate biographer, believes "Enfield to have been his birthplace." Mr. Palmer, a friend of later years, points to a country house in Clapton; whilst probability also

suggests Smithfield, in which parish his father's chief residence was situated. The most circumstantial account of his birth places it in Enfield. It says that "his mother went on a visit there from about the corner of Long Lane, in Smithfield," and while there a son was born to her. If little John Howard made his entry into the world at his grandfather's house in this unexpected and unceremonious manner, it may account for the fact that he was a very delicate, white-faced infant, who was scarcely expected to live.

We do not doubt that Baby John had every attention paid to his health. Ample means were at his father's disposal. He was considered a wealthy man in those days, owning four houses in different parts of England. We may be sure the upholsterer's shop on the north side of the Priory of St. Bartholmew's very seldom saw the ailing child. The first three months of his life were passed alternately at the large and well-known village of Clapton, in Hackney parish, and in a "venerable mansion situated on the western side of the street," in Enfield.

At the end of those twelve weeks Baby John's mother died, and was carried away from the home in Hackney. Her puny wailing infant felt the loss of maternal care acutely. Seeing the small face grow smaller and the white cheeks thinner day by day, the worthy carpet manufacturer decided on a novel step.

About forty miles from London, on the swampy borders of the lilyed Ouse, stood a picturesque little village. It is there still. Tall elm trees

guard every approach to it, even along the king's highway. Silver-green pollards fringe its boundaries, a hoary church raises its square battlemented tower towards heaven from its bosom, and clusters of little cottages gem its village green.

In this hamlet of Cardington, John Howard, senior, owned a small farm. It was a lonely little place, coyly hiding its face from the public road. But cows, with their udders full of milk, grazed knee-deep in buttercups round it; hens clucked and cackled before the door; ducks swam on the spawn-covered, weed-grown pond near its green; apple trees stood in its orchard, and butter and cream lined its dairy shelves. What better place could be found in which to rear a poor motherless babe?

So it happened, one bright spring day, that a postchaise made its way past the tall granite cross surrounded by its sentinel elms, past the quaint turnstile leading into a quiet churchyard, past many of the timber-walled, golden-thatched cottages, and stopped at last on Mr. Howard's property. Out of the chariot stepped a figure muffled in a travelling cloak, and from the depths of the ponderous vehicle came a tremulous wail.

That helpless cry acted as an "open sesame" to the door of a mother's heart, and unlocked a pair of loving, tender arms. Mrs. Brown was prepared to meet an exacting master; but now, without stopping to notice him, the good woman flew to her open door, pressed the child to her breast, and stilled its sorrow.

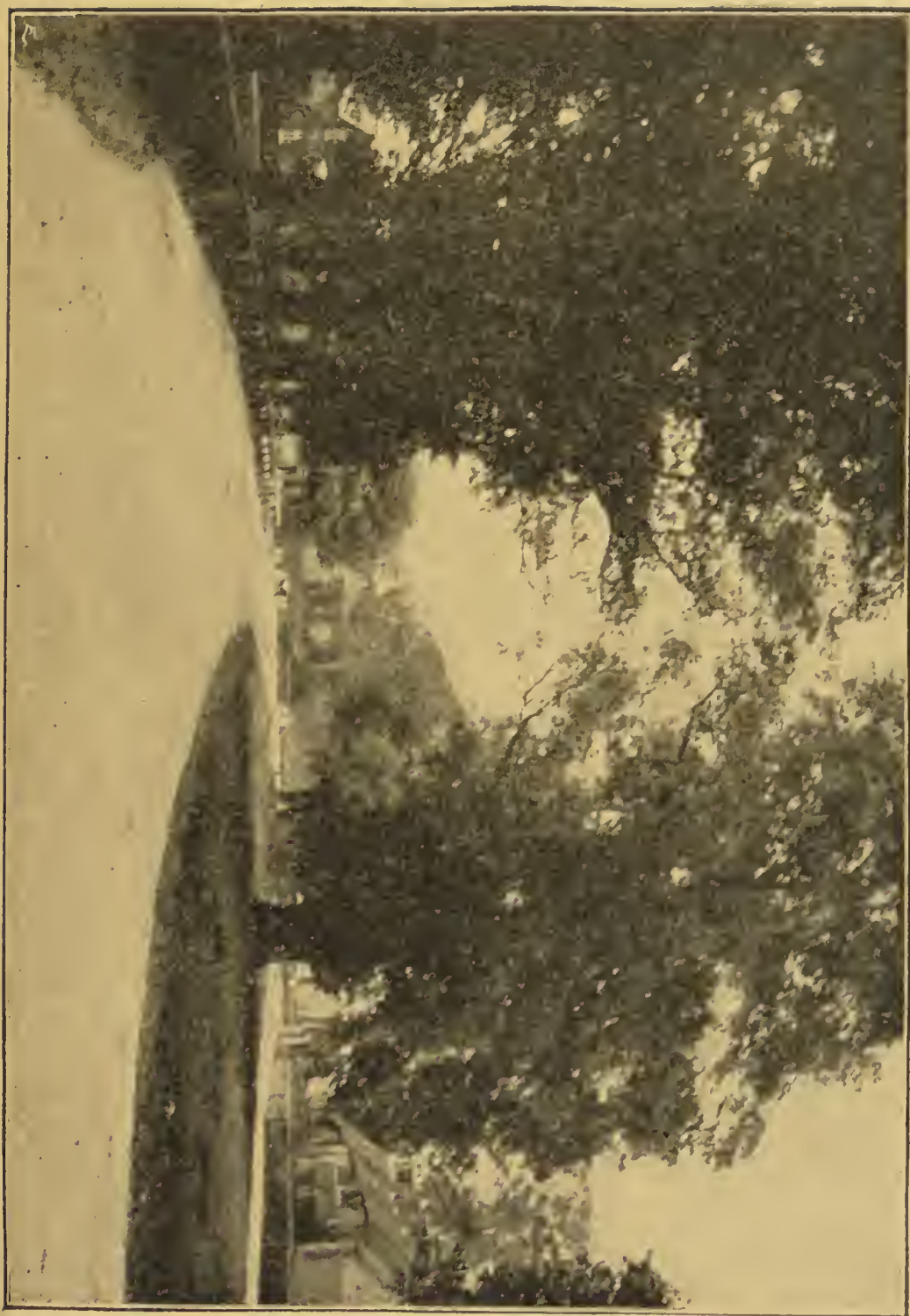
Then she led the way into her parlour, and for a moment emotion prevented speech. With the wisdom and forethought that had consolidated a considerable fortune in London, worthy John Howard had thought of all the external advantages to be reaped by his son in Cardington. He had not realised the powerful feelings that would be his when he saw little John in the good woman's arms.

Not so very long before—only two months, indeed—other arms had encircled the infant in a dying embrace, and another breast had satisfied his wants. Now all that was mortal of that loved wife lay at rest under the clays of London, and he was giving her office to another.

“Take this child and nurse it for me,” came the old, peremptory, yet beseeching command, given by a widowed father to his dependant. And faithfully and tenderly was the trust fulfilled. When John Howard, senior, left little John behind him under the deep-eaved roof of a village farmhouse, he left him to open one of the happiest chapters of his life.

A very different life from that lived by his elder sister began for Baby John that clear spring day. Ever after he looked back upon it with delight. A letter came from far-off Russia many, many years afterwards, in which he said: “I always loved my Cardington friends.”

We can fancy how a reverence for all human-kind and suffering animal life was fostered in that happy infancy; and how the farm-horses grew to be his companions and friends. Sixty years



afterwards, whilst doing his great work in lazarettos, he found time to write: "Give a look to the hedge in Close Lane, that the sheep do not jump over;" inquired "whether the old chaise-horse was gone blind yet," and directed that "Duke should have his range when past labour."

For five years the pale-faced little boy lived happily under the hospitable roof-tree of his father's farm. The country air—blowing, as it did, over the level fenland from the salty marshes of the Wash—and the generous diet of his temporary home, brought him through the perils of childhood perhaps more successfully than the more luxurious living of a town would have done. The sickly-faced child ran and played on Cardington Green, growing rosy and strong, and delighting his foster-mother's heart.

Everyone loved the little lad: his manners were so gentle, his modesty so great. Always foremost in self-sacrifice, he was always last to think of himself. Dull and undemonstrative, little John was only distinguished by a kind of quixotic attitude on all occasions. The man who was afterwards to become conspicuous by bearing the burdens of others, fulfilled this law of Christ even from his infancy; and it is interesting to trace that the seed which was to bear such plentiful fruit was sown in the flat meadowlands which have given to England some of her noblest sons.

Worthy Mrs. Brown was the cherisher of these first boyish days, as she had been the succourer

of his infancy. Her care was never forgotten. Many years after, when the delicate child had grown up to be a man, he took special care of his old nurse. He was so mindful of her minutest wants that in cold weather he himself saw that coals were regularly taken into her cottage, and used for warming her bedroom. Whenever he went on any of his long journeys he left directions that she should never want for anything which could minister to her comfort in his absence. And his gratitude continued to the end. Though away at the time of her death, he ordered Nurse Brown to be buried at his expense in Cardington churchyard, and a tablet erected to her memory. Not content with such personal attention, John also appointed his foster-sister—Mrs. Brown's only daughter—maid to his fondly loved second wife when he brought her down to his childhood's home.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAD.

His Father's House—Discipline—School-days—His Books.



BEFORE John Howard was seven years of age he bade farewell to the farmhouse beside the sluggish Ouse. He had to take up his life in one of his father's houses near the great Metropolis.

To the homes at Enfield and Clapton the elder Howard was wont periodically to retire from his busy life. In both he "maintained great order and regularity; and to his constant observance of the Sabbath, and of the duty of family prayer, his son, perhaps, was indebted for that piety which ever after formed a most distinguished feature in his character."

In these houses, too, were established habits of order, punctuality, and thrift. His generosity he gained elsewhere. John Howard, senior, though a strictly just man, was inclined to parsimony. No undue luxury was allowed to encircle the tradesman's boy. In after years his frugality and self-control in all things pertaining to the flesh

evidenced this early training. Solid comfort must have been his portion, however, for the elder Mr. Howard was able to leave his two children equal portions out of £15,000.

Although his father engaged in trade, it is quite possible that gentle blood flowed in little John's veins, and that he could claim affinity with some of the noblest families in Britain. John Howard was not a man given to idle boasting; yet on the death of his first wife he caused the family arms of the Dukes of Norfolk and the Earls of Suffolk, Effingham, and Carlisle to be carven at the head of her tombstone in Whitechapel churchyard.

Little John must have pined for the hedgerows and lanes of Bedfordshire when he lived in the ancient house at Clapton, or over the warehouse in Long Lane. There was not much freedom in this new life. His father's views were bounded by the narrow circle of a busy merchant's environment. "He knew no more delightful object than a well-furnished warehouse; no higher character than a wealthy citizen." The quiet, imaginative child, who had seen

"Books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything,"

must have felt strangely out of place. The elder Howard had nominally retired from business, yet the atmosphere of commercial calculation enveloped the home. Himself a rigid dissenter, he exacted every outward form of religion from his two children. Yet they did not grow to dislike it.

Though far wider in his theology, and far more charitable in his judgments, John Howard never shook himself free from the habits and thoughts of those early days. In after years he often attended the old Parish Church in Cardington, yet he remained a Nonconformist to the end of his life. His views were—"like the commandment of God—exceeding broad."

From the monotonous round of home life little John went to his first school, and was put under the care of a certain pedagogic minister, the Rev. John Worsley, writer of many abstruse and classic works. But John certainly benefited little by his master's classical abilities, whatever their quality. For seven years he lived in the town of Hertford under the care of Mr. Worsley. "I left that school," he himself has left on record, "not fully taught any one thing." Poor little fragile boy! Doubtless his tutor saw nothing of genius in the benevolent brow, prominent nose, bright eyes, and thin lips! Yet it was there—the genius of passionate philanthropy.

From Mr. Worsley's school the lad—in his court dress, with long lappels, deep pockets, and large collar, with his hair cropped short in front and worn in curls behind—was promoted to an academy presided over by "a man of singular abilities and of unusual attainments," one John Eames, F.R.S. He, also, seems to have passed over young Howard somewhat carelessly. Here he learned "small Latin and less Greek." The boy must have been unusually torpid and of slow development, for in after years he showed special

aptitude for statistical work and many branches of science.

Dr. Aitken says of his friend at this period: "Of the classic writers of Greece and Italy his knowledge was next to nothing; of languages, ancient and modern, excepting perhaps French—*ditto*; in the literature of his own country he was very imperfectly versed; and to his dying hour he was never able to write his native tongue with either elegance of diction or grammatical correctness." Yet who that has pored, spellbound and horror-struck, over Howard's wonderfully realistic descriptions of prison life can acquiesce in this opinion?

The publication of his *State of Prisons* raised John Howard, in after years, into the ranks of the most realistic of authors, and the immediate success that attended its appearance proved its literary worth. With this work before us, we rather incline to an opinion expressed by another of Howard's friends. Dr. Stennel says: "He was a man of great learning, deeply read in polite literature and conversant with most of the modern languages."

In one branch of science, at least, Mr. Eames succeeded in interesting his pupil. Astronomy and meteorology were particularly congenial to the philanthropist. For instance, in vol. liv. of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* occurs the following paragraph:—

"An account of the degree of cold observed in Bedfordshire, by John Howard, F.R.S., in a letter to John Canton, M.A., F.R.S. Read April 12th,

1764:—‘ Sir, I would beg leave to acquaint you of a degree of cold that I observed at Cardington, Bedfordshire, the 22nd of November last, just before sunrise ; Fahrenheit’s scale, by one of Bird’s thermometers, being so low as ten and a half. If it will throw any light upon the locality of cold, or think it worth the society’s observation, would leave to your better judgment, and remain, with great esteem, Sir, your obedient servant,

‘ JOHN HOWARD.’ ”

The two words “before sunrise” well indicate John Howard’s industry and diligence, noteworthy in later years. In order to thus read his instrument, he must have risen from his warm bed under the deep-eaved roof of Cardington Grange, gone out in that darkest hour which precedes dawn, walked a considerable distance down the fir walk to the bottom of his garden, examined a thermometer set up there, by aid of a dim lamp, written the register down with cold fingers, and then returned to rest again.¹

His knowledge of the heavenly bodies, too, was of immense use to him on the steppes of Russia and elsewhere, when, like the Magi of old, he followed the stars, and was guided by their unerring course.

In closing this brief chapter on John Howard’s school-life,—of which, alas ! too little is known,—

¹ In addition to the above paper, two other records of John Howard’s devotion to accurate science are found in the *Transactions*. One relates to “the Heat of the Waters at Bath, containing a Table of the Heat of the Waters of the different Baths.” The last one is a note “on the Heat of the Ground on Mount Vesuvius.”

one must conclude that a classic education did little for him. His noble life was formed on a different basis. Not the heroes of Greece and Rome, but the apostles, prophets, and patriarchs of the Bible were his models.

“There was one literature, and only one, with which he was thoroughly acquainted—that of the Holy Scriptures. In its pages he found the principle of all science, the foundation of all wisdom. To him the Word of God was in the place of all other literature and lores.”

CHAPTER III.

'PRENTICE DAYS AND AFTER.

The Grocer's Apprentice—A Warehouse in Watling Street—His Father's Death—The Heir—A First Journey Abroad—A Taste for Art—Medical Studies—Newington Chapel.



THE Divine Controller of events saw it necessary for Moses to be a slave's child, a king's adopted son, and a wanderer in the deserts of Sinai, before he was fit to be the leader of his brethren. So a mercantile training was needed by John Howard to give him habits of accuracy and neatness.

If the young philanthropist had lived in these days, he would probably have proceeded to one of the universities after leaving Mr. Eames' academy. But the universities' religious tests, made one hundred years before, in 1662, had not been repealed, and Nonconformists were still excluded from the national seats of learning.

John Howard, senior, as mentioned before, was possessed of a large fortune. He lived in comfort, and could have afforded to let his son remain in idleness had he so wished. But the elder Howard

was too wise a man for this. He believed, and rightly, that entire dependence upon property is far more demoralising than any kind of manual labour.

In fancy we see the stern old Puritan imperiously deciding that his quiet son should enter trade. That son was allowed no say in the matter, for the father's word was law. Stern, methodical, industrious, he governed his family in a remarkably lofty way, a method his son imitated in after years.

Paying the handsome sum of £700 as a premium to an extensive grocery establishment in Watling Street, City, his father bound John as an apprentice to the firm presided over by Alderman Nathaniel Newnham. We have no portrait of 'Prentice John; but we can follow well the flat-capped, full-skirted, much-buttoned young fellow as he daily trod the south side of Watling Street and crossed Old London Bridge to his uncongenial occupation. We can see the square-toed, silver-buckled, large-flapped shoes skipping over the many puddles which then lay in most of the London thoroughfares. No doubt the "lively and penetrating eye" took in much as he rambled under the shadow of the Monument, or paused for a moment near the Boar's Head in Eastcheap. No doubt the "strong and prominent features," which afterwards grew into a settled cast of thoughtful sadness, now began to shape themselves to that expression, whilst the rapid gait seemed strangely at variance with that soft, quiet manner (bordering almost on effeminacy) which distinguished him at this time.

We must not think of the Newnham establish-

ment as a modern grocery store. No plate-glass windows tempted passers-by. It was a wholesale business, and most of its drudgery was carried on in a dusty, ill-lighted warehouse, filled with boxes and bales of merchandise. In this way his work had a sadly disastrous effect on the apprentice's health. Day by day the brisk step lost its briskness; day by day the hairless cheek grew whiter and the big brow more prominent. He appears to have entered on the whole thing merely as a matter of duty. He never loved money-making, so his heart was never in his work. This of itself is almost sufficient to account for the failure of health that followed.

Only two things saved him from breaking down. His opulent but penurious father allowed him the luxury of keeping a body-servant and a couple of saddle-horses. He also stipulated for private apartments for 'Prentice John. The daily ride across London Bridge into green lanes and comparative country, and an opportunity of following more congenial employment in his leisure moments, afforded by the separate suite of rooms, enabled 'Prentice John to keep at his desk until he was his own master.

When September 1742 brought round his seventeenth birthday, he was left fatherless. The property to be divided between the boy and girl was very considerable. John was bequeathed seven thousand pounds in money, all the landed property, pictures, plate, furniture, and a moiety of the library.

His sister, whose name has not transpired,

inherited eight thousand pounds, the other half of the library, almost all the family jewels, and her mother's wardrobe.

This will is interesting chiefly because it shows that young John had his father's full confidence. The elder Howard, with prudence and wisdom, must have seen excellent business acumen and honesty of purpose in his son. He left directions that John should be full and sole residuary legatee on reaching the age of twenty-four years. The three executors—Laurence Channing, uncle; Ives Whitbread of Cardington, first cousin; and Lewin Chomley, his mother's relative—showed that they participated in the confidence placed in the heir, for from the first he seems to have been allowed considerable control over his money.

A very short time after the merchant had been laid beside his two wives in a London churchyard, his son stood for the last time as a 'prentice in Watling Street. Round him were gathered his employer and his employer's family. They had been charmed with "his little elegant presents and other marks of attention." His shyness and reserve may have militated against his popularity in the saleroom, but only added to his charm in the parlour. So there was real regret that cold winter morning when young John Howard cancelled his indentures, and realised that he was his own master and a free man.

Yet, withal, how gladly the lad of seventeen turned his back on barrels and hogsheads and bales! The pursuit of money in this guise had been so uncongenial to him. When he rode away from

Watling Street, followed by his servant, he left with the good wishes of all with whom he had come in contact, and with high hopes before him. He carried with him, as a fruit of those months spent as a city merchant, a valuable stock of general information, the habit of careful, dutiful attention to details, and the foundations which afterwards enabled him to say: "I am the *Plodder*, who goes about to collect materials for men of genius to make use of."

And now we have some pictures of the days that came immediately after.

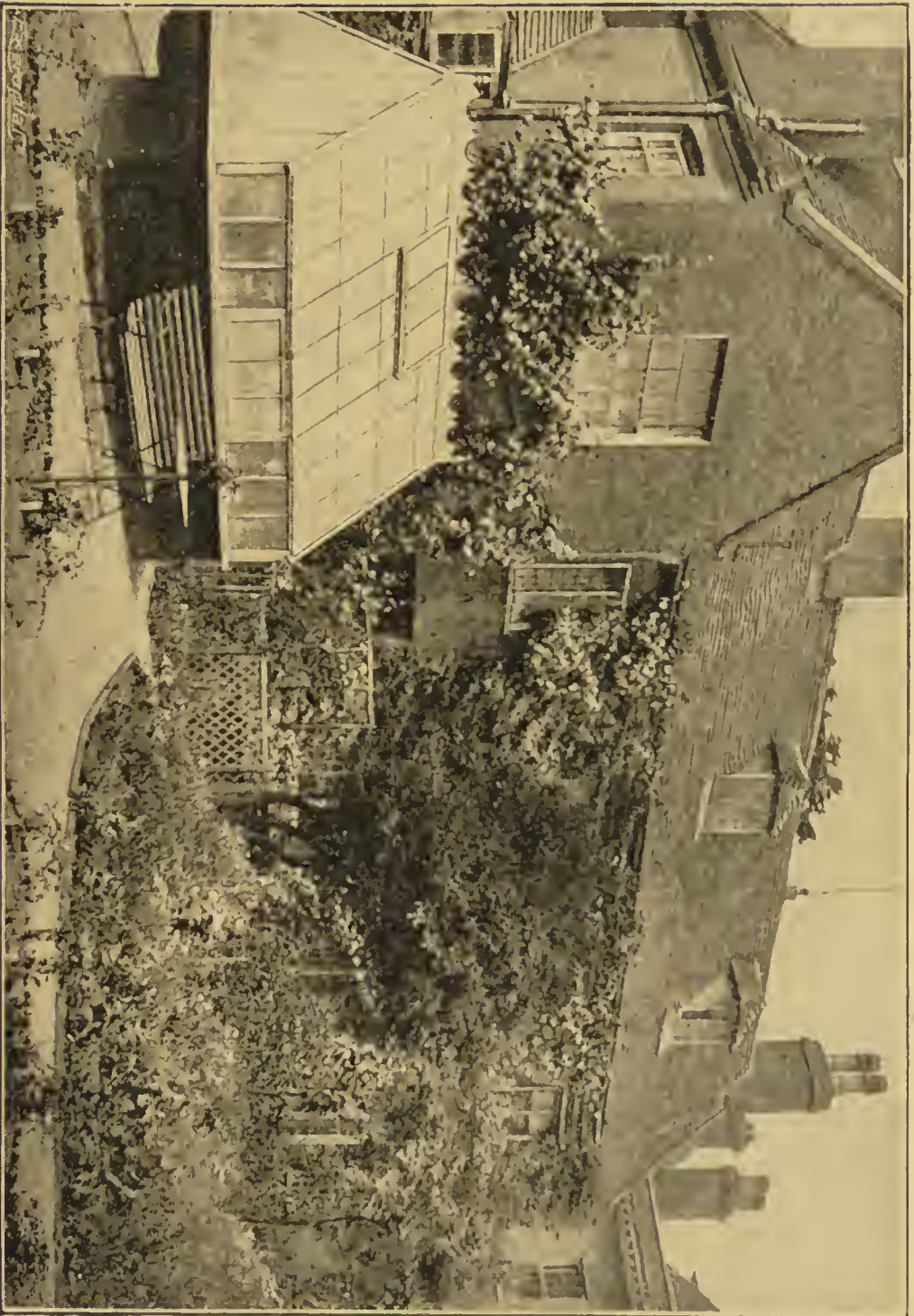
He began a process of self-education, by travelling. Perhaps the lad was conscious of his school deficiencies; probably delicate health had something to say to it. Debility, almost amounting to prostration, had weighed upon John Howard those last few months in Watling Street. A change would have been deemed imperative if he had lived in these days: it was considered advisable even then, when travelling was much more difficult and expensive. John had ample means at his disposal, and this latter was no consideration for him. He wanted to get rid of the flavour of business, and learn the manners and customs of other lands.

We do not know whether he set off on the first of his wonderful journeys alone, or in company with others; but we do know that the first moneys were now spent on travelling by him who afterwards laid out £30,000 in this way. We also know that this journey to France and Spain was the first of the many he undertook, and in which

he travelled 42,033 miles in ten years. But the objects of this first journey were very different from those of subsequent ones. This was undertaken solely for change, and in search of novelty.

John Howard found many objects of art to interest and educate his ear and eye in this visit to the Continent. "He embraced with eagerness every opportunity of contemplating, with the eye of an ardent, if not of an enthusiastic, admirer, the finished specimens of skill in ancient and modern times." And he visited every museum, gallery, and exhibition which lay in his power. He also bought some really fine paintings, which afterwards adorned his home in Cardington. "At this period of his life the embryo philanthropist was somewhat of a connoisseur, loving art and all that pertained to it fervently."

In after years, when John Howard went on pilgrimage, it was not, as Edmund Burke finely says, "to survey the sumptuousness of palaces or the stateliness of temples, not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of curiosity of modern art, nor to collect medals nor to collate manuscripts, but to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distress of all men in all countries." Indeed, in subsequent journeys he resolutely turned away from music and art in order to give his mind to



HOWARD'S HOUSE AT BEDFORD.

other things. Once only we read of him going to a concert—an experiment he determined not to repeat, “as,” he says, “I found it took up too much of my memory and attention.”

After a year or more spent in search of health, John returned to England, polished in manner and improved in looks, but still very delicate.

For a short time “he tried to mix with the world, and live in the style of other young men of leisure and fortune.” Then he had to give up the attempt, and go and live quietly, as an invalid, in the country. He took lodgings in a house at Church Street, Stoke Newington, Middlesex; and here he lived the life of a student, surrounded by his books, and attending to his religious exercises, studying the theory of languages, and working out experiments in science. He added to this pursuit of knowledge a considerable attention to the practice of medicine. How useful this became in after life we shall see further on, when his knowledge of medical terms and technicalities enabled him to sustain the rôle of a physician during a perilous journey from Paris to Lyons.

His accumulation of sanitary facts at this time also afterwards placed him in the first rank of sanitary reformers, while his careful following of hygienic rules preserved him from all evil in prison, lazaretto, and hospital. It is interesting, in this connection, to discover that John Howard had great faith in pure air, pure water, and the laws of science and common sense; that he knew the virtues of limewash, and practised it in his quarantine cell; that he never went fasting into

places which teemed with fever and dirt; and that he exposed the germs of gaol fever to fierce heat before he encountered them on notebook and paper. To sum up in his own words: "Next to the free goodness and mercy of the Author of my being, temperance and cleanliness are my best preservatives."

At Stoke Newington, in spite of his simple life, nervous prostration, gout, and a tendency to consumption manifested themselves. In order to overcome those dangers, he was put upon a remarkably rigorous diet. One of his earliest biographers has said of this: "It laid the foundation of that abstemiousness and indifference to the gratification of the palate which ever after distinguished him." All animal food was forbidden the invalid, no fermented or alcoholic drinks were allowed, and water and the plainest vegetables sufficed him. His luxuries were milk, tea, butter, fruit, and cheese. In fact, every superfluity was cut off.

In after years John was a vegetarian by choice, and not of necessity. He was always indifferent to food, and was thus able to penetrate where more fastidious travellers would have feared to go. In the posadas of Spain, the caravansaries of Turkey, in England, France, and elsewhere, his simple wants could easily be supplied. He often went long journeys with some apples, a roll, and a pinch of dry tea in his pocket. Water was his only necessity, and that could be obtained anywhere.

Even under the strict regimen enforced, it seemed very doubtful if young Howard would

ever reach his majority; but by God's blessing on the means employed, this benefactor of the human race was preserved for his splendid work.

It was at Stoke Newington that he was "received" into fellowship with a dissenting Church. An unattractive enough meeting-house was that little Independent Chapel—long blank walls, pierced by a few cusp-headed windows and a square door. A high-pitched roof and the lack of a porch gave it an almost barn-like exterior. Its interior was quite as unprepossessing. High-backed pews traversed it from stem to stern, and a gallery ran all round it; whilst a small pulpit, surmounted by a large sounding-board, was its chief furniture.

Here, Sunday after Sunday, the embryo philanthropist listened to sermons, eloquent and otherwise, from many well-known divines. Dr. Watts passed from his little study, with lines of Horace over the door, and books on every available spot, into that pulpit. Dr. Doddridge preached there, and so did Gibbons. But, of all, young Howard made one Meredith Townshend his most intimate friend. This pastor took great interest in the lad whom he had received into the Church, and with his aid John steered clear of the many intellectual pitfalls that lined his way.

One little picture of this period must close the chapter. Fresh air, and plenty of it, was one ingredient in the wise prescription laid down for young John Howard. Every morning he might have been seen riding out into the country on his favourite nag. Arriving at a quiet spot a few


miles from town, he would dismount, and fasten his horse to a tree, or turn him loose to browse on "the long acre." Then throwing himself upon the grass under some friendly shade, he would read and meditate for many hours. A crust in his pocket, and a draught at any neighbouring stream, formed his midday meal on such occasions.

In the evening he returned to his lodgings and his more accurate studies, calmed by that quiet communing with nature and nature's God, and all unaware of the destiny slowly unrolling before him.

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN QUIXOTE.

Mrs. Loidore—Marriage—An Early Bereavement—The Catastrophe at Lisbon—Captured—The Prisoners.

“RS. LOIDORE, will you be my wife?”

John Howard was standing in his little room, gaunt and pale with recent illness. Opposite, astonished and surprised, stood the good landlady who had nursed him for weeks with kind and thoughtful attention. I think she must have imagined that her lodger's brain had been turned by his sufferings.

“Marry you? Nay, that will I not!” we can fancy her answering, as the young man offered her his hand. “I am more than double your age. You are twenty-five and I am fifty-two! We should be the laughing-stock of the place.”

John Howard doubtless frowned. This seemingly sudden determination had been ripening in his mind for weeks past. All the time he lay on a bed of sickness in this good woman's house he had received every care and attention at her hands.

Mrs. Loidore took him in when he had been driven from his first lodgings in Church Street by unkindness and neglect. Though very delicate herself,—she had not enjoyed a single day's health in twenty years,—this widow of a clerk in some whitelead works ministered to her lodger's wants in a tender and motherly way.

Perhaps because she was accustomed to illness herself, Mrs. Loidore had sympathised more fully with the nervous disorder which so often prostrated her young boarder. This "worthy, sensible woman," all unwitting of the curious plan that was maturing in her patient's brain, had cooked jellies and prepared the few delicacies allowed the lad. She had looked after fires and opened windows at proper seasons; she had made his bed, and generally attended to the numerous wants of a somewhat querulous invalid. Gratitude, in his mind, was easily magnified into love; and here was young John offering to turn the thoughtful, motherly nurse into his wife! He pressed his question.

"Mrs. Loidore, will you be my wife?"

"Nay, sir; that can I not," came the answer, not only a third but many times. "I am but a poor widow to mate with a wealthy young man. I am not in the same social position as you are."

But John's own mind was made up. In no way but through marriage could he repay the debt of gratitude which burdened his heart. He had come to the conclusion, during his illness and restless, slow recovery, that it was his duty to marry Mrs. Loidore, and nothing could change his determination.

It was a curious struggle. On one hand stood

lonely John, a pathetic figure enough ; on the other, a worthy, unworldly woman, past the meridian of life, yet still simple, unpretentious, undesigning, and unambitious. I think her heart must have ached as she thought of how little love could have environed the boy at school, at home, or in business, for otherwise her motherly attentions could never have impressed him so much.

As the widow strove to deny herself all that makes life bright to most women,—love, protection, honour, wealth,—John Howard redoubled his attentions. As one of his gravest chroniclers writes : “On the very first opportunity Mr. Howard expressed his sentiments to her in the strongest terms of affection, assuring her that if she rejected his proposal he would become an exile for ever from his family and friends. The lady was upwards of fifty, and therefore urged the disagreement of their years as well as their circumstances ; but after allowing her four and twenty hours for a final reply, his eloquence surmounted all her objections, and she consented to a union wherein gratitude was to supply the deficiencies of passion.” They were privately married about the year 1752.

This union — so seemingly inappropriate and singularly contracted—turned out a happy one. John behaved to his elderly wife with the greatest tenderness. Never thoroughly well during the three years which followed, Mrs. Howard was watched over with untiring thoughtfulness. “I would freely part with a hundred pounds to give her one good night’s rest,” he was heard to say after one of the many disturbed ones she passed.

But the gentle, grave woman gradually sank, and this strange union was dissolved by death in 1755. John Howard had been much attached to his spouse. Whilst she lived he always said he was happy in the choice he had made, and when she died he was a sincere mourner.

This "woman of excellent character, amiable in her disposition, sincere in her piety, endowed with a good mental capacity, and forward in exercising her powers in every good word and work," was a member of the Church of England. So she was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, White-chapel, with every mark of respect and affection. The inscription on her handsome tombstone reads as follows:—

Here lies the Body of
SARAH HOWARD,
WIFE of JOHN HOWARD, Esq.,
of Stoke Newington,
in the County of Middlesex,
Who died the 10th of November 1755.
Aged 54.

"In hopes of a joyful Resurrection
Through the merits of Jesus Christ."

This epitaph is in the severely simple style John always affected. Nothing was said of the worth of the woman who was not unworthy of the love of a great and good man, nothing of the grief he felt. It has been left for his earliest biographer to state that "after her death he more than once declared that, were he to marry again, he would prefer just

such another person and mind as hers to all the charms of youth and beauty."

To those who look only on the surface of things, this unromantic, curious first marriage of John Howard's may seem only a passing incident. Others can see further. To this whimsical first union the philanthropist himself credited much of his after work. Seeing his wife's tender compassion to every living being, there woke the first yearning in his heart for power to help those less fortunate than himself. That desire had not its full development for many years. But it is interesting to note the sowing of a seed from which so rich a harvest came.

It was at this time that George the Third sent a message to his Houses of Parliament concerning a terrible disaster that had overwhelmed the south of Europe. In this manifesto occurred the following sentence: "This dreadful and extensive calamity cannot fail to affect the hearts of all persons who have any sense of religion and humanity." We do not quite know how the death of between thirty and forty thousand people in the great earthquake of Lisbon affected most of the inhabitants of Great Britain; but we do know that Parliament immediately voted £100,000 to the relief of those distressed foreigners, and that the message was a summons to one Englishman at least to go over and help the sufferers.

The terrible news was as a trumpet-call to John Howard. "Attracted by reports of the sufferings of the survivors, he determined to hasten with the utmost speed to their assistance." In doing so, he had to cut himself free from his old life.

When he took his passage in a vessel called *The Hanover*, all his friends were averse to his action. "It is tempting Providence," said one, "to run such a risk of being taken prisoner by some of the ships of France." "Privateers are abroad on the high seas," declared another. "You will never reach Lisbon," quoted a third.

And he never did. But John Howard reached a point in his life of which God alone can see the importance. *The Hanover* was chased by a French privateer, and all on board of her taken captive.

John Howard's own account of the sufferings experienced is so graphic that I may well transcribe it. "Before we reached Brest," he writes in his *State of Prisons*, "I suffered the extremity of thirst, not having for above forty hours one drop of water, nor hardly a morsel of food."

Then in the castle of Brest the prisoners of war were treated with the utmost inhumanity. For six nights John Howard lay on straw in a dark and filthy dungeon. Occasionally the hatches were opened, and food was flung to the wretched inmates. It was like throwing flesh to wild beasts. The prisoners, maddened by hunger, flung themselves upon it, and tore the meat into pieces with their hands and teeth.

We can imagine what an indelible impression this sight must have made on the sensitive mind of John Howard. He himself could be content with bread and water, but his fellow-prisoners' sufferings filled him with horror. He learned in the dungeon at Brest that hundreds of his countrymen perished there, and that in one day thirty-six

were buried in a hole at Dinan, not far off. At the end of two months the Frenchmen around were impressed by the sight of this cool, quiet, bright-eyed prisoner of war, so calmly exerting himself for others. They discussed the matter, and, as a result, Howard was allowed to return to England to negotiate an exchange for his fellow-captives. He modestly sums up the result of his efforts:—

“When I came to England, on parole, I made known to the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen the various particulars (already related), which gained their attention and thanks. Remonstrance was made to the French Court; our sailors had redress, and those that were in the three prisons mentioned above (Brest, Morlaix, and Carhaix) were brought home in the first cartel ships.”

Friends flocked round the young traveller on his return, ready to congratulate him, but he forbade all such expressions of goodwill. “Do not congratulate me until my work is done,” he said. And that work was never accomplished until his life was over.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOME AT CARDINGTON.

The Grange—A Great Joy—Mrs. Howard's Wedded Life—
Jewels—The Old Garden and the Root-House.

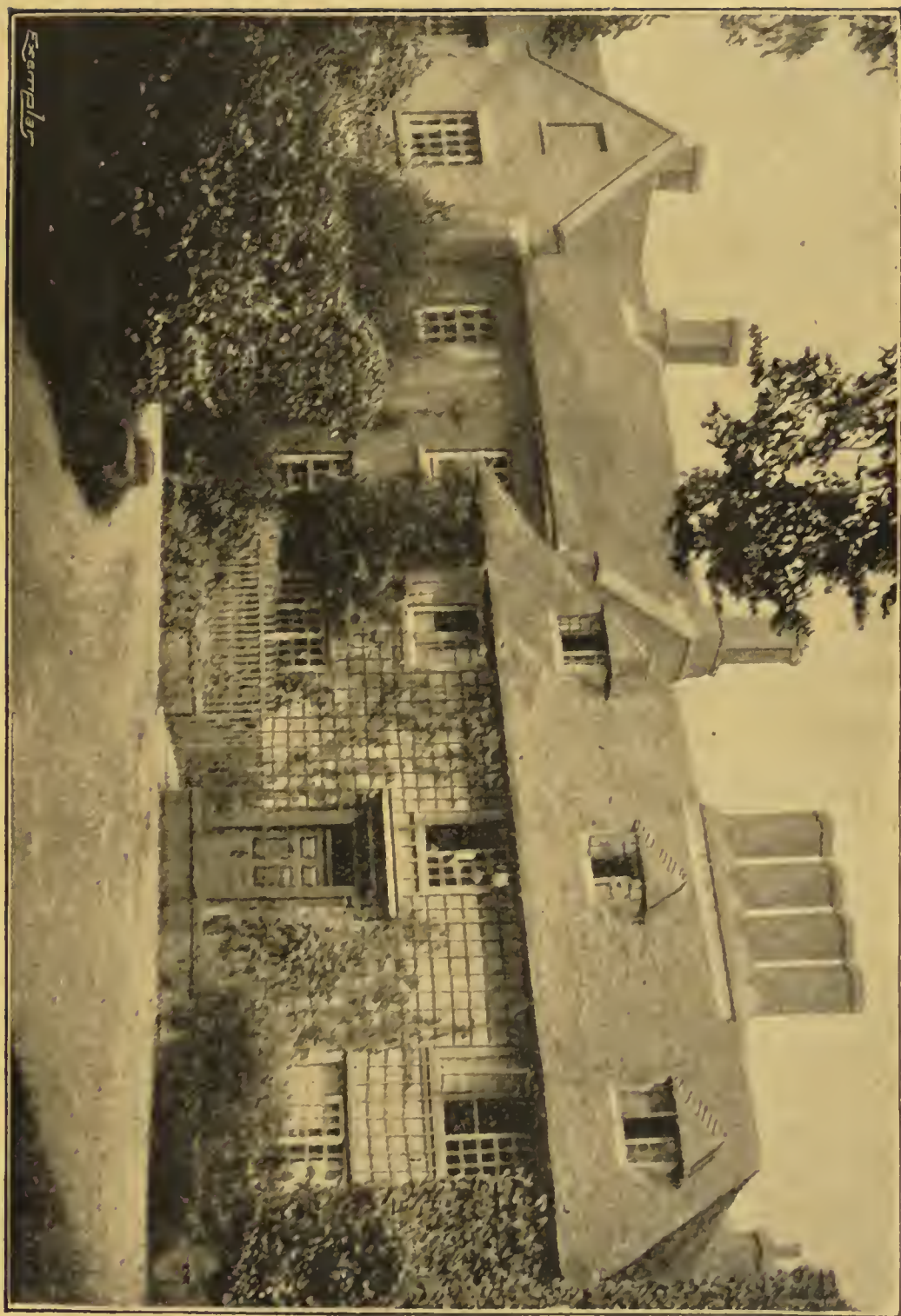


DOWN in the Midlands, close beside that "ancienne towne whose seale is an eagle displayed with wings inverted gule," stands a long, low, rambling, latticed - covered house. It has three crooked little dormer windows let into the roof, out of which blink diamond panes, like bright eyes from under overshadowing brows.

Giant westeria hangs tassels of purple bloom there, roses nod over the doorway, cotoneaster lays berried tendrils along its porch. Round the house lies a garden full of jewel-like hollyhocks, flaming marigolds, and star-like Michaelmas daises.

"Broad green walks,
Where soft the footsteps fall,"

lead all round the old-fashioned pleasaunce and fragrant rosary. Red-stemmed rock pines shake needles over bush and flower, and tall elm trees guard each opening. A holly hedge—high and thick



HOWARD'S HOUSE AT CARDINGTON.



and scarlet-berried—bounds the garden on one side ; and on the other a high wall suggests visions of golden apricots and luscious plums. To the rear of the Manor House cluster farm buildings and sheds, and in front of it old Cardington Church raises its square battlemented tower towards the sky.

Through the modest front door of this unpretentious house there came one day a new master. Thin and spare and small, with bright large eyes, massive Roman nose, “and lips expressive of strength of character,” with a somewhat haughty step, John Howard took possession of his new home.

“This little gentleman,” his face crowned with a tie-wig of double curls, was very different from the round-faced boy who had sported and played on that village green some thirty years before.

John Howard had seen something of life since the days spent in Prole’s Farm. He had wooed, and wedded, and been left a widower ; he had toiled behind a counter and travelled in Europe ; he had been a prisoner in France and a person of some importance in London. Still he clung to his first happy home, and had spent some of his patrimony in purchasing the old Manor House of Cardington. It had doubtless been the object of his admiration in those far-off days of childhood. Now he determined to improve it in every way.

Visitors passing through the front door are now greeted with large panels of paper, on which are depicted shackles and keys, in commemoration of Howard’s great life-work ; but in his time they

were welcomed by various pictures in massive frames, picked up on his first journey abroad.

He was no ascetic. The rooms opening out on both sides of the little square hall, with its flight of shallow broad steps, are built and modelled for comfort. Deep beams cross the low ceilings, windows are pierced in sunny corners, huge fire-places guarded by quaint brass rails abound, and heavy doors shut out every suspicion of draught.

"Every spot which lives in the thoughts of men upon historic deeds and lives, is venerated ground," and this old house of Cardington is full of memories of one who, like his Divine Master, came "to preach deliverance to the captive."

Very quietly and peaceably life moved on in this Bedfordshire village for nearly two years, and then the great joy of his life dawned on John Howard. His earliest biographer thus describes it:—

"In 1758 he made a very suitable alliance with Miss Henrietta Leeds, eldest daughter of Edward Leeds, Esq., of Croxton, Cambridgeshire, King's Serjeant."

Barren words enough! But not too barren, perhaps; for no words could have described the happiness of the next seven years. His love for the sweet woman he wedded was the brightest spot in his life. It was no common affection. "In perfect security and harmony" lived the twain in an ideal marriage. "Before marriage he struck the stern bargain that in all disputes his voice should rule; but afterwards he was the minister of her every wish, the giver of her every desire."

The woman thus loved was possessed of no little beauty of feature, as well as gentility of birth. She had an ample forehead, from which the hair was smoothed back over a cushion and surmounted with a little lace 'kerchief. From under this coronet expressive eyes looked out calmly upon life. Thoughtfulness, meekness, and humility were all shadowed forth on the oval cheek, pointed chin, and fine mouth. A miniature still extant portrays the sweet face for us, crowned with a cluster of jewelled stars; yet Henrietta Howard seldom wore gems. So little did she care for such ornaments, at a time when ornaments were considered essential on a woman's dress, that soon after their marriage she sold many of those she possessed and put the proceeds into a receptacle the couple called their "charity purse." Many a shivering cottager was warmed, and clothed, and fed from this sale; and like the famous Queen of Sweden, Henrietta must often have received her diamonds back again in the tears of gratitude shed by her dependants.

The Manor soon grew into an ideal home. New rooms were added to the house, and fresh windows built, while the beautiful garden and grounds were laid out and cultivated to the highest pitch of loveliness. The desert of three arable fields soon blossomed as a rose under loving hands; strange plants were introduced, the seeds of curious flowers sown, and even trees planted. Moss was encouraged to grow over the golden gravel dug from the bed of the lilled Ouse. Yew and box and holly were trimmed, and clipt, and pruned into archways and figures. These still remain; and so do the elms

and firs planted by Henrietta Howard, forming a circular walk round the whole pleasaunce. But in place of the kitchen garden, so cunningly hidden with shrubs and flowers that it was no eyesore from the house, we have now a rosary, fragrant with its wealth of blossom. Otherwise the sweet old garden is much the same as it was a hundred years ago.

We can fancy our married lovers pacing

“The pillar’d shade,
And high o’erarched and echoing walks between,”

in that perfect concord which can only spring out of the holy estate of matrimony. Never treating his wife as a being of inferior order, although “exercising with mildness and in love the authority with which he was divinely invested,” this dual existence was a very perfect one. Harriet was always welcome, even to the little “root-house” which was John Howard’s special domain. We can imagine her face peeping in at the small Gothic windows, under their roof of thatch, whilst her husband worked away at some of the books he kept here. We can hear her light foot mounting the steps outside, and her hand knocking for admittance at the portico of this curious study; and we can see her sitting on the slabs of curious peat, which acted as chairs in this little harbour. We suspect she filled and trimmed the lamp (formed out of a root) which stood on the stone table. We know her presence took nothing from the flavour of Hervey, Havel, and Baxter, Milton, Thomson, or Watts,—the

authors Howard delighted to peruse. Here the couple enjoyed many hours of pleasant intercourse, doubtless spending much time over "those records of greatest antiquity" which brightened their whole lives. Opposite the door, also, Harriet hung up some verses written by herself. These lines show what delight she took in this quaint retreat:—

"O Solitude, bless'd state of man below,
Friend to our thought, and balm of all our woe,
Far from throng'd cities my abode remove
To realms of innocence and peace and love;
That when the sable shades of death appear,
And life's clear light no more these eyes shall cheer,
Its work may be fulfilled; its prospects won
By virtue measured, not a setting sun."

CHAPTER VI.

JOY AND BITTERNESS.

Expectation—Little Jack—The Valley of the Shadow—Sorrow
—Mrs. Howard's Burial—A Heart of Chivalry.



ONE blustering windy morning in March 1765, just seven years after his marriage, the master of Cardington Grange might have been seen pacing the fir walk in much perturbation.

Occasionally he stopped to look (though with unseeing eyes) at the Siberian flower, with its tall purple spikes of bloom, which he had planted under the big pine tree. Anon he marked how the rough spring wind rocked the rooks' nests in the trees on either side of him. Sometimes he consulted the hour-glass in the arbour, or paced through the low window into the quaint parlour of his house. At others he stood still, listening intently for an expected sound from the chamber overhead. At last it came, and the man's whole frame shook with emotion as he buried his face

in his hands, and then raised it in thanksgiving to the cloud-flecked sky above.

Only one thing had been wanting to complete the happiness of John Howard and his wife in their beautiful home at Cardington. Up to that moment no children's voices had wakened the echoes of the Manor, no little footsteps had wandered round the old garden. Now, at last, God had sent the twain the wish of their hearts.

In spite of unusual fears overshadowing this event, a baby was born, and little "Jack" had come home safely. Many, many prayers had unitedly ascended to God for the gift He had now vouchsafed. No wonder John Howard felt "uplifted as he received this heritage from the Lord."

Henrietta Howard was in her fortieth year, and had been in a delicate state of health long before her baby was born. For three days the couple rejoiced together over the fluffy-haired, healthy little boy that had come

"Out of the Nowhere into the Here."

Then John Howard was again left a widower, with an infant son on his hands. God had given him the desire of his life, and broken his heart.

How it happened no one can tell. The mother was so well that he had gone over the way to the white-pewed, stone-paved church to return thanks for the happy event. When he came back, he went at once into his wife's room—that many-

latticed, long-shaped chamber abutting over the porch.

Ever mindful of her smallest wants, he carried with him a dish of chocolate prepared by his own hands. We can picture the whole affecting dreadful scene. The tender words, the helpful attendance, then that sudden terrible spasm and collapse. Whilst lifting the cup to her lips, no doubt with loving words of thanks, Mrs. Howard sank back into her husband's arms and expired.

We can only imagine the grief of the bereaved husband. The unforeseen blow struck out at one fell stroke his bright illusive future. His soul was pierced with the burning rod; deeply and immediately it went home. His affections, thus rudely cut away, grew again never more; he had loved as men love only once. Henceforth his sunniest side of life was blank and dark. All his religion—and to Howard religion was everything that pride, fortitude, philosophy are to other men—was needed to support this crushing dispensation. But he “bowed his head to the chastening rod of the Almighty with the meekness of a Christian and the resignation of an Oriental patriarch”—so writes one of his biographers.

The funeral was a quiet, unostentatious one. From Cardington Grange to the old parish churchyard is only a matter of a few yards, so there was no need for mourning coaches, or for hired hands to touch the holy dead. Yet many mourners followed Mrs. Howard to that quiet grave on the north side of the church. All her depend-

ants were passionately attached to their gentle mistress. The domestics served from love and not for wage; her lady's-maid, grand-daughter of the old nurse who fostered John Howard, always spoke of her with respect and affection. Even many years afterwards she could not part with a miniature of her beloved mistress without tears.

So a big concourse clustered round the porch, and followed the bereaved husband with their sympathy. His wife was borne through the great west door, past the high whitewashed pews, under the tall wooden pulpit, until the coffin rested beneath the Gothic east window with its coloured lights.

The memory of his precious wife never faded from John Howard's mind. The anniversary of her death was always kept sacred. He fasted, with meditation and prayer, from sunrise to sunset. Shut up in the long room that had been "the gate of heaven" to Henrietta, he tasted nothing the livelong day but a piece of dry bread and an apple. Ever after he treated all women with a peculiar attention. *Place aux dames* was always his maxim, and he had a uniform habit of giving up his own ease and accommodation for the sake of doing a real kindness to any female of a decent character. Every act of courtesy was paid as if to his dead wife. A couple of instances alone may be quoted.

During a rough crossing in the packet from Dublin to Holyhead, John Howard found a maidservant crowded-out from the berths. He immediately gave up his own couch to her, and

lay on the cabin floor himself. Once again, when the good man happened to be travelling by coach from London to Cardington, he noticed a fellow-passenger looking weak and unwell. It was only a poor woman, but she might have been a princess by the attentions he paid her. Warm wine and water were offered her at every stage; she was made to ride inside as soon as there was a spare seat, John Howard settling the difference in fare. He talked to her in a kind and fatherly way until, as she said, "I found more consolation in his conversation than I can possibly express." Alighting, himself, three miles from Bedford, he gave the coachman a gratuity to take particular care of her and her luggage—"for," said he, turning to say farewell to the object of his solicitude, "you look so ill and distressed as not to be able to take care of yourself."

In the treatment of female prisoners he advocated extreme delicacy—remembering, doubtless, the dainty, lovely ways of those seven years in Cardington Grange.

The writer of this memoir lately stood in the churchyard of that little Midland village whilst the coffins of Henrietta Howard and her son were reverently exhumed. On the one was the inscription, "Henrietta Howard, aged 39"; on the other, "John Howard, aged 34."

For over a hundred years they had rested undisturbed, but necessary alterations to the church necessitated their removal. They were reverently laid down again near the same spot. Over the remains the old tablet was re-erected—

the very one John Howard had ordered. It bears the following inscription :—

In hope of a resurrection to eternal life,
Through the mercy of God by Jesus Christ,
Rests the mortal part of
HENRIETTA HOWARD,
DAUGHTER of EDWARD LEEDS, Esq.,
of Croxton, Cambridgeshire,
Who died the 31st of March 1765, aged 39.

“She opened her mouth with wisdom ;
And in her tongue was the law of kindness.”

The self-effacement noticed in the epitaph on his first wife is still more noticeable in this instance. Edward Leeds has been forgotten—the name of John Howard is immortal. Yet he has not even mentioned it!

CHAPTER VII.

FATHERHOOD AND PUBLIC DUTY.

At the Meeting — In the Home — A Father's Love — False Accusations — Lord Monboddo's Visit — Master, Landlord, and Christian — A Note from a Diary.



LOSE beside "the water called Owze," and almost in the shadow of St. Cuthbert's, stood an old-fashioned, three-ridged meeting-house. From north to south ran this edifice, and in the centre was the pulpit. Endwise to the preacher's platform rested a massive communion table thirteen feet long. Two tall windows shed light on both, whilst huge galleries ran round three sides of the building.

Amongst the eight hundred worshippers in this old meeting-house, Sunday after Sunday, was a certain little gentleman in Quaker-like garb, always accompanied by a miniature edition of himself. No woman could have given more tender touches in setting the drab coat, or smoothing stray curls that fell over the child's forehead. With untiring patience, the boy was lifted on to a seat when restless, and set down again when weary. All

through the long standing prayer little soft hands strayed over the spare shoulders, and played with the big buttons on his father's doublet. When tired of this quiet amusement, the tiny mite would creep into the shelter of those ready arms, and, with them around him, sit patiently during the "discourse."

Then, when the preacher took his stand under a big sounding-board, and placed a Bible on the great crimson cushion, or suspended his hat with its silken band from a large brass holder behind him, the wee laddie sat motionless and quiet, with his hand locked in that of the elder John.

After service the widower paced across worthies of many past generations sleeping quietly under the west wall of the old meeting-house, and piloted the willing little feet through a low door set in the high wall. Here, in a house built by John Howard in "The Pineries," little Jack was refreshed and regaled with milk and fruit and bread, set ready on the oaken table of a comfortably furnished parlour. There was space, in this quaint long room, for the baby boy to work away some of the energy bottled up during the preceding service.

Many kindly folk cast compassionate glances at the lonely widower and his little son. They knew how sorely the sweet, gentle mother was missed, and how anxiously, yet how inadequately, the father tried to supply her place. They knew that out of John Howard's intense love for the babe she had left him was growing an almost morbid fear of spoiling his boy. Yet little Jack treated

his father with the most perfect freedom and familiarity.

One of the tenets John held—it was an inherited one—was that obedience to parental authority must be enforced, whether reasonable or otherwise. He had a lofty idea—some of us may think too high an ideal—of the power of the head of a family. From the earliest period of his infancy Jack was taught that he never was to have anything he cried for. It was an almost ludicrous sight to see the little man take that scarcely short-coated baby and lay him on his lap, speaking no word till a fit of passionate weeping was still—almost ludicrous, yet withal strangely pathetic. For that middle-aged father could not but lack a mother's tenderness in thus dealing with his son. "Omnipotent are the laws of fireside and nursery." Well for us that those laws are usually promulgated by a woman.

Sweets and cakes were absolutely denied to little Jack Howard, but at Cardington he was abundantly supplied with all sources of childish amusement. "In fact," says Dr. Brown, "whilst he was a child his father never appeared so happy as when he had him by his side, nor so highly gratified as when others took notice of him; which, as he was a very fine boy, and always dressed with remarkable neatness, was frequently the case."

To the last hour of the young man's life, when reason had abdicated her throne and he had grown into a melancholy madman, Jack Howard never failed to manifest the strongest degree of

filial affection for his father. When to everything else he showed maniacal aversion, the mention of the parent who had so tenderly guarded his infancy was enough to call forth outspoken gratitude for the uniformly kind treatment he had always received from him. The false slander set in circulation by a vindictive contemporary has been proved to be false by those who knew him best. One gentleman, who knew the philanthropist well, says: "He always spoke of this son with an ardour of parental affection, opposite in the extreme to that cold, unfeeling severity of which he has been most falsely and most foully accused. It was in moments of unreserved confidence that the soul of John Howard shone forth in all her native lustre. To have seen him at such a season, and to have heard him on such a subject, would have convinced the most incredulous that this calumny is the offspring of the most detestable malignity."

Besides this personal example and care, John Howard surrounded little Jack with the best attendants he could find. "A pious and excellent woman" acted as housekeeper and general superintendent, and "most faithfully and conscientiously she discharged all the duties which his confidence required at her hands." The gardener, who gave Jack seeds and showed him how to sow them, was a faithful retainer who lived in his master's service for over half a century. His name—Joshua Crockford—is a synonym in Bedfordshire for "sobriety, industry, and neatness." Yet, withal, how much the philanthropist missed his wife in

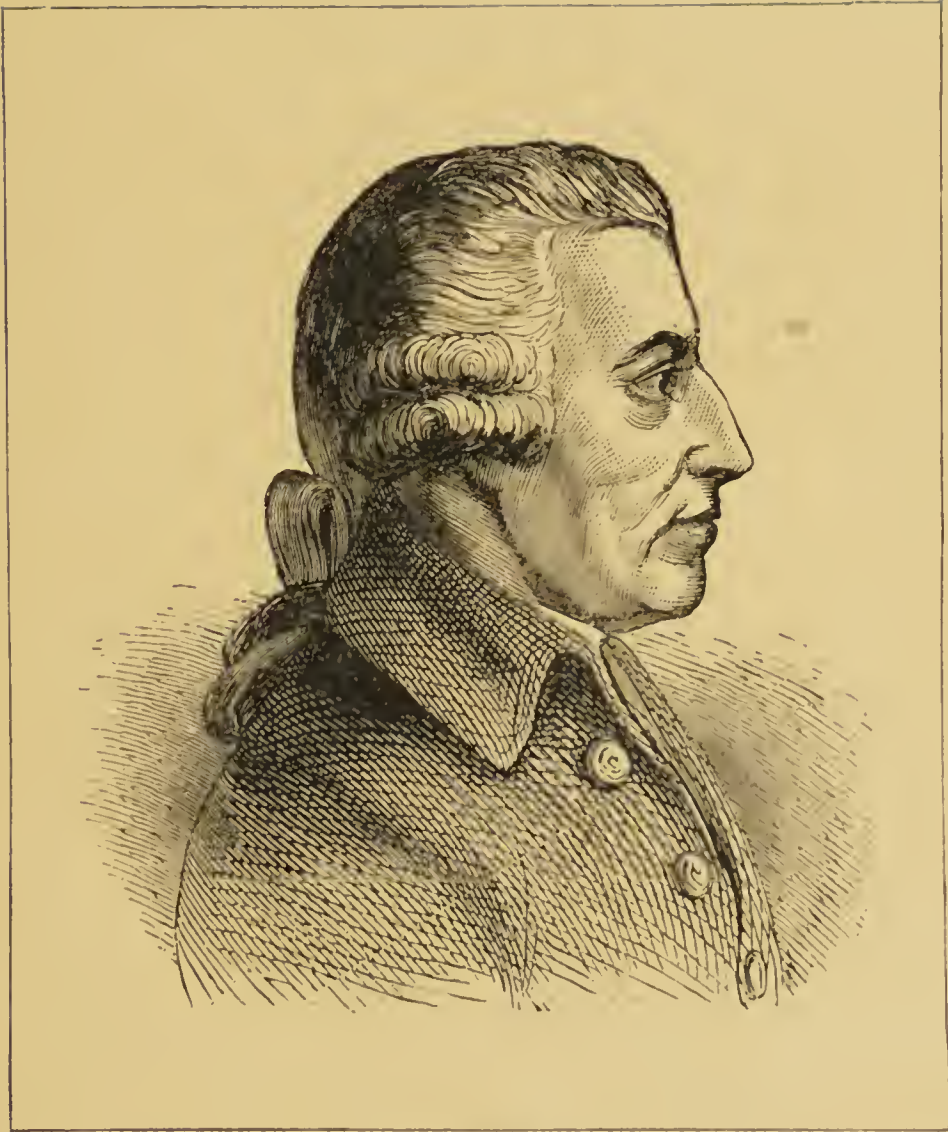
this incessant care for their son is shown by a single anecdote.

Some years after her death, just before one of his continental trips, he was walking with the boy in the garden, and pointed out a particular fir tree on the border of the flower-bed. "Jack," he said solemnly, pausing before it,—“Jack, in case I should not come back, you will pursue or not any alterations and improvements on the place that you see fit; but remember, this walk and these trees were planted by your mother; and if you ever touch a twig of them, may my blessing never rest upon you.”

And now, having seen John Howard as a husband and a father, we must devote a few pages to him as master and landlord.

One day an elderly gentleman, attended by his servant, rode into the village of Cardington and put up at its little hostelry. He gave his name as Lord Monboddo, and stated his business briefly. "Characters," he said, "often appear very well at a distance which could not bear close inspection. I have come to make inquiries, and to see if one John Howard at home is the same man as John Howard abroad."

Mine host was not unwilling to answer this stranger. He did it by deeds more than words. Lord Monboddo was conducted to the trellised Grange and allowed to question the servants. There he found that the master who usually sat with his watch on his knee in order never to be late at an appointment or lose a moment, was equally punctual in giving his dependants what was just and due.



JOHN HOWARD.



He required "elegant neatness in his habitation and furniture," but provided the same for them. He was generous, too, as well as just. We have seen a "guinny" which he gave to a faithful man-servant as a bonus when leaving home, and we read of a pair of horses bestowed on the same trusty domestic before starting on his last journey.

Lord Monboddo also learned that John Howard always gave plain, clear, and simple directions in a kind and gentle manner, but he expected prompt and implicit obedience to them.

He found that "his servants lived happily whilst in his employ, and he possessed their attachment to such a degree that they all but idolised him, and were ready to make any sacrifice for his service." Many of them lived with him twenty and thirty years, for this good master made good servants.

From the household Lord Monboddo proceeded to the village. Was John Howard as a landlord the same person as John Howard the philanthropist? He saw model schools and comfortable cottages, with everything about them sanitary and hygienic. He listened to tales of the landlord, who regularly visited these habitations and ministered to their wants. In fact Lord Monboddo found a model village where once had stood the most neglected and filthy of hamlets.

From the comfortable cottages this eccentric seeker after truth repaired to the beautiful old church. Here, he was told, John Howard worshipped only once a day (his principles called him into Bedford for morning service). "In this place, however," concluded the sexton, "our master wishes

to be buried, unless he dies abroad. Then he is not to be moved, but a plain slip of marble is to be placed under his wife's tomb, with this inscription:—

JOHN HOWARD, died —

Aged —

“My hope is in Christ.”

Now we come to John Howard as a Christian. Lord Monboddo could not collate facts about this. We do so from the many sentences scattered over the philanthropist's diaries and correspondence. Much as many of us may disagree with the *form* of Church government John Howard thought the most scriptural, we cannot but recognise the worth of this man who did justly, loved mercy, and walked humbly with his God.

We have seen when and where God's marvellous light first brightened his soul, and we have watched him at service in his chapel. We can now trace, on his second visit for change and recreation to the Continent, a deepening and widening of his spiritual life.

The first journey abroad was taken in search of health and amusement, the second was a kind of mid-passage to the philanthropic travels which followed. It is worth while to notice in what a moderate manner and calm way he was led onward and upward.

John Howard over and over again surrendered himself and “his babe, begging for him the Holy Spirit.”

In Holland he also dedicated his four-year-old son to God, whilst fretting at “the distance

from my ever dear boy." In Naples he made and signed solemn covenants between himself and his Creator. I append one, which he prepared first at Naples in 1770 and ratified many years afterwards at Moscow. It is dated 27th May:—

"My highest ambition is the honour and glory of God. I am deeply sensible that it is the presence of God which makes the happiness of every place. So, Oh my soul, keep close to Him in the amiable light of redeeming love! Lift up thine heart and eyes unto the Rock of Ages, and then look down upon the glory of this world. A little while longer and thy journey will be ended. Be thou faithful unto death. Duty is thine, though the power is God's. Pray to Him to give thee a heart to hate sin more—uniting thy heart in His fear."

Quietly, unostentatiously, John Howard *lived* his religion before his own people in Bedfordshire. He never used horses on the Sabbath. Four or five miles he walked to and from the quaint three-edged chapel in Bedford, rather than give his coachman work. Close to it he built a little house on Pinner's ground, and maintained a caretaker therein, in order to have rest and quiet for himself on Sunday. The cottage stands there still, on the brow of Castle Hill, surrounded by a high red wall and almost hidden under a large vine trained over its face. A prim box-bordered garden lies beneath three quaint dormer windows, and doubtless gave much opportunity for quiet meditation between services.

I have stood in the long, narrow parlour, with its heavy beams overhead, and looked out at the

window where this quaint, old-fashioned, silk-stockinged, white-wigged little gentleman took his weekly meal of apples, tea, and two-penny rolls. Here he and his pastor, Mr. Smith, much discoursed about the better country both were bound for. Like Bunyan's pilgrim, they came here "to a delicate place called Ease," and rested awhile. Here much of John Howard's spiritual experiences were wrought out. Here, with tears, he severed his official connection with the Baptist Connexion worshipping in Bunyan Chapel, and threw in his lot with the minority who seceded from it on the question of infant baptism. Like John Bunyan, John Howard had his son baptized soon after his birth, and he always attached great importance to early administration of that sacrament.

He was a man of the most liberal and broad views. To a Sister of Charity, in her flapping hood and nunlike garb, he could answer that he loved "people of all religions." He could marry two Church of England wives. He could quietly take the Pope's blessing when the Pontiff said, "I know you Englishmen do not value such things, but the blessing of an old man can do you no harm." He could attend Cardington Parish Church to return thanks for the birth of his only son, and present pulpits to the Baptist and Pædo-baptist Chapels. He could be friends with a pious Moravian minister, and, indeed, cultivated a charity "exceeding broad." Like St. John of Patmos, he could see that there are twelve gates to the City of God, and recognise that each gate is of one separate pearl.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HIGH SHERIFF OF BEDFORDSHIRE.

The Prison of Bunyan—Howard as Sheriff—The Beginning of a Great Task—Gaol Fever—A Philanthropist on his Travels—Bedford Gaol as it is—Reforms—Yet a Prison still—"For the Master's Sake!"



"AS I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where was a den."

With these words the Glorious Dreamer introduced us to Bedford County Gaol one hundred years before a certain High Sheriff called John Howard came to inspect it. Behind iron-grated windows the tinker of Elstow looked out over the quaint old town, with its many-gabled, irregular-roofed houses and tiny shop-windows. "Soe dismall a place" was the prison in those days, "so uncomfortable and close," so "cruel, oppressive, and rigorous" the gaolers, that one John Bubb and his fellow-prisoners were "soe like to perish." "A calamitous condicion," indeed, was that found in Bedford Gaol in 1666, and it was scarcely better in 1766.

In those days His Majesty's Justices of Assize

held their sittings in a small court-house wedged in between "the Priest Howse," with its emerald lawn lying shaven in the sunlight, and an old Grammar School founded by Sir William Harper, Knight, Mayor of London. Very close and very unhealthy was that same court; but the splendour surrounding it was very great.

Under the lofty steeple of "Our Paul's" drove up the judge in his chariot, surrounded by javelin-men in blue livery and escorted by the Sheriff. Eight bells pealed merrily from the beautiful pierced spire as he passed into the hall of justice, followed by a little, slender, silent gentleman in close curled wig, bearing a white wand. This Sheriff discarded much of the useless pomp which had made others notable. The blue coats of his serving-men were quite plain (one is preserved in Cardington to this day), and the coach was not so smart. Service in the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St. Paul's was shorter than usual. For John Howard, Esquire, was a Nonconformist, and dared the "Test" Act by undertaking his legal duties at all. He had entered on this work of High Sheriff in his own peculiarly solemn manner, not for the glory and pleasure of the thing, not for any emoluments accruing to the post, but from a real desire to do good to his fellow-men.

It had been the custom for the High Sheriff to leave all inspection of prisons and gaols to his subordinates. Not so did John Howard, or his wonderful work would never have been begun. His white wand was one October day waved before the door of the building which had succeeded

that in which John Bunyan was once confined. He mentions it in the opening sentences of *The State of Prisons*. "The distress of prisoners, of which there are few who have not some imperfect idea, came more immediately under my notice when I was Sheriff of the county of Bedford. . . . I was



THE OLD PRISON ON THE BRIDGE AT BEDFORD.

called to my task by my office as Sheriff. To the pursuit of it I was prompted by the sorrows of the sufferers and love to my country."

It is hard to realise how this scrupulously clean, delicately - nurtured, middle-aged man insensibly grew fond of the task evolved out of his first visit to a gaol. He whose dainty, almost finical,

ways in his own home roused admiration and ridicule, went into this "den," where the air was "poisonous to an intense degree," where fever and dirt were rife, where there was no provision made for the cravings of nature, where there was no water laid on, and no fresh air admitted. To one of John Howard's type Bedford Gaol must indeed have seemed "*A Hell in miniature.*" Yet how calmly and quietly he writes about it.

"In this prison there is on the first floor a day-room for debtors, which is used as a chapel, and four lodging-rooms. For felons, on the ground floor, two day-rooms,—one for men and the other for women,—without fireplaces. Two cells for the condemned. The rooms are eight and a half feet high. Two dungeons, down eleven steps, one of them dark; the window of the other eighteen inches by twelve. Five pounds a year is allowed the gaoler for straw, which is not on the floor, but on frames or bedsteads. The justices in winter, upon application, grant coals both to debtors and felons. The court is common to both. No infirmary. No bath."

"Not so very bad, after all," remarks some reader who knows not what was hidden under these calm, methodical, mechanical words. Those who have read much of John Howard's researches realise that behind this quiet, unexaggerated statement lay "pitiless, bedless, seatless, lightless, breathless, and almost foodless cells"; that disease waxed rampant there; that death by slow suffocation from foul air, or death by rapid malignant fever, lurked there; that torture and misery "clotted tears on wan faces," and violent madness lay at the doorway;

that filth and indecency were natural handmaids to vice and foulness; that chains and heavy irons, spiked collars and starvation, were the general concomitants of the iniquitous system then pursued in Bedford Gaol and elsewhere. We know all this, and thank God for the little great man who set to work to bring some sort of deliverance to the captives.

In this account of the Home Life of John Howard it is not my purpose to enter minutely into the mission work placed before the philanthropist that soft October day. Only I must give a few examples of the kind of thing John Howard found when he took a journey "in search of a precedent." Leicester, Nottingham, Gloucester, Lichfield, Salisbury, Ely, York, Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, London, and all the west of England were visited during that four months' winter journey.

In one he found wretched prisoners chained on their backs to the floor. Heavy iron rods prevented their legs being moved, and a spiked iron collar precluded the possibility of rest. In another, men and women felons were herded together in the same room like cattle, no provision being made for segregation of the sexes. In a third "unutterable squalor and filthiness" marked the seven and a half foot long cells; while in a fourth three human beings were locked up in rooms "dangerously small" without air or light, except that admitted by a hole measuring four and a half inches by eight. In a fifth, debtors, whose only offence, in many cases, was extreme poverty, were confined in damp, underground cells, dripping with moisture, foul with

disease, and full of fever germs. No drains—no water—no beds—no surgeons—no chaplains—no sewers—no windows—no pumps—no chimneys—no fires—no courts.

To read accounts of the Fleet, Marshalsea, and Newgate at this time is to wade through a veritable sea of horrors. One Bliss, a carpenter, being in the Marshalsea for debt, had, “for the diversion of those looking,” an iron cap forced on to his skull and screwed so tightly that blood was forced from nose and ears; at the same time his thumbs were put into a pair of thumb-screws and screwed up until blood started from the tips.

Another miserable man was confined in a cell with two putrefying corpses for several days. “Vermin devoured the flesh and ate the eyes out of the head of the carcasses, which were bloated, putrefied, and turned green during the poor debtor’s dismal confinement with them. Others were kept for three weeks at a time chained on the floor of dungeons until their living bodies mortified. Some thirty, forty, aye fifty, persons were sometimes locked up in a room not sixteen feet square from sundown to sunrise. Small wonder that “several in the heat of summer perished for want of air.”

It is useless to go further. It would only needlessly harrow the feelings. But if the mere story of such wrongs makes our blood run cold, what effect must the sight of such sufferings have had upon tender-hearted John Howard?

We know what it incited him to do! It made him leave his bed and work at reports before three o’clock on winter mornings, though he had been up

till late inspecting the night before. It made him draw up a scheme for the amelioration of the state of prisoners and lay it before the House of Commons, a scheme for which he was publicly thanked at Westminster before all the Lower House. It made him travel 42,035 miles in ten years, at a time when travelling was difficult, dangerous, and expensive. It made him cheerfully spend £30,000 of his own patrimony in order to benefit poor prisoners.

In only fifteen out of 150 prisons did he find the rules concerning cleanliness, decency, and health upheld. Consequently that terrible pestilence called "gaol fever" was everywhere rife. At first, when a certain gentleman alighted from his horse in front of some Bridewell, and, leaving it in charge of his groom, walked into the prison, he "constantly, carefully smelled of vinegar." And no wonder—the stench and effluvia to be met with were a source of the greatest danger to his health. Prisoners at the assize, brought into open court, were capable of infecting and carrying death to the Lord Chief Baron, attendant Sheriffs, and 400 spectators! What virulence, then, must have been shut up inside the gaols! Yet this man, who believed in the virtues of limewash and hygiene, could calmly, after awhile, write:—

"By degrees I grew less attentive to smelling of vinegar and changing my apparel, and I have long since entirely omitted these precautions. Next to the free goodness and mercy of the Author of my being, temperance and cleanliness are my preservatives. Trusting in Divine Providence, and believing

myself in the way of duty, I visit the most noxious cells. . . . I never enter an hospital or prison before breakfast, and in an offensive room I seldom draw my breath deeply."

Thanks to his trust in God, and sound common sense, John Howard could enter where a fever that carried off 200 men of one regiment, 2000 sailors in a fleet, and occasioned "a mortality greater than all other diseases or means of death put together" was rife. He could hold the hot hands, touch the burning brows, stoop over the stricken, and yet come to no hurt. Verily the good hand of his God was upon him, and the pestilence could not come nigh him—until his work was done!

During these investigations John Howard maintained much of his quaint simplicity and all his temperate ways. He carried with him in his little postchaise a small supply of green tea, a few bunches of raisins, a little bottle of sweetmeats, and some apples. His marketing on his journeys consisted of "a good melon for five farthings," or "a fresh roll and a handful of currants." "Pine-apples and potatoes" formed items in another day's expenditure (this time in Moscow). If he had neither potatoes, pine-apples, currants, melons, nor apples, he regaled himself from a little brass tea equipage he carried, and "little regard if I have nothing else," he adds.

Once, in Scotland, he and his servant came on horseback to a public-house, where the only fare procurable was black bread, eggs, and oatmeal. This miserable meal was set out on a three-legged stool. Even the philanthropist was inclined to

murmur at his unpalatable dish, but was much pleased at the rebuke conveyed by an old dame who lived in the place. "Moses, sir, had greater privileges while keeping his Father's flock in the Wilderness than when in the Court of Pharaoh." So he cheerfully hacked at the awkward dish with a garden knife (the house furnishing no other), knowing *he*, too, was about his Father's business.

For some time after John Howard began his benevolent journeys, he usually travelled in a post-chaise; but he found that though he pinned his coat around him when measuring the dimensions of those cells he entered, his clothes retained so foetid an odour that he could not bear the stench. So he gave up the carriage and took to the saddle, having to bathe his whole body often in vinegar, and always to disinfect his notebook before perusal by subjecting it to the heat of fire for some hours.

This "man of detail, of laborious accuracy and minute research," could be free-handed enough with his own property. "At his own charges" he always travelled, and many and many a time has a debtor been released and restored to his wife and family directly after John Howard left the gaol he was confined in. We know whose was the open purse that unlocked the gloomy doors, whose the willing mind that directed the generous hand. Thus though, like St. Paul, "he was in journeyings often, in perils of robbers, in perils in the city, in weariness, in watchings, in fastings often," yet the blessing of those ready to perish surrounded the philanthropist wherever he went.

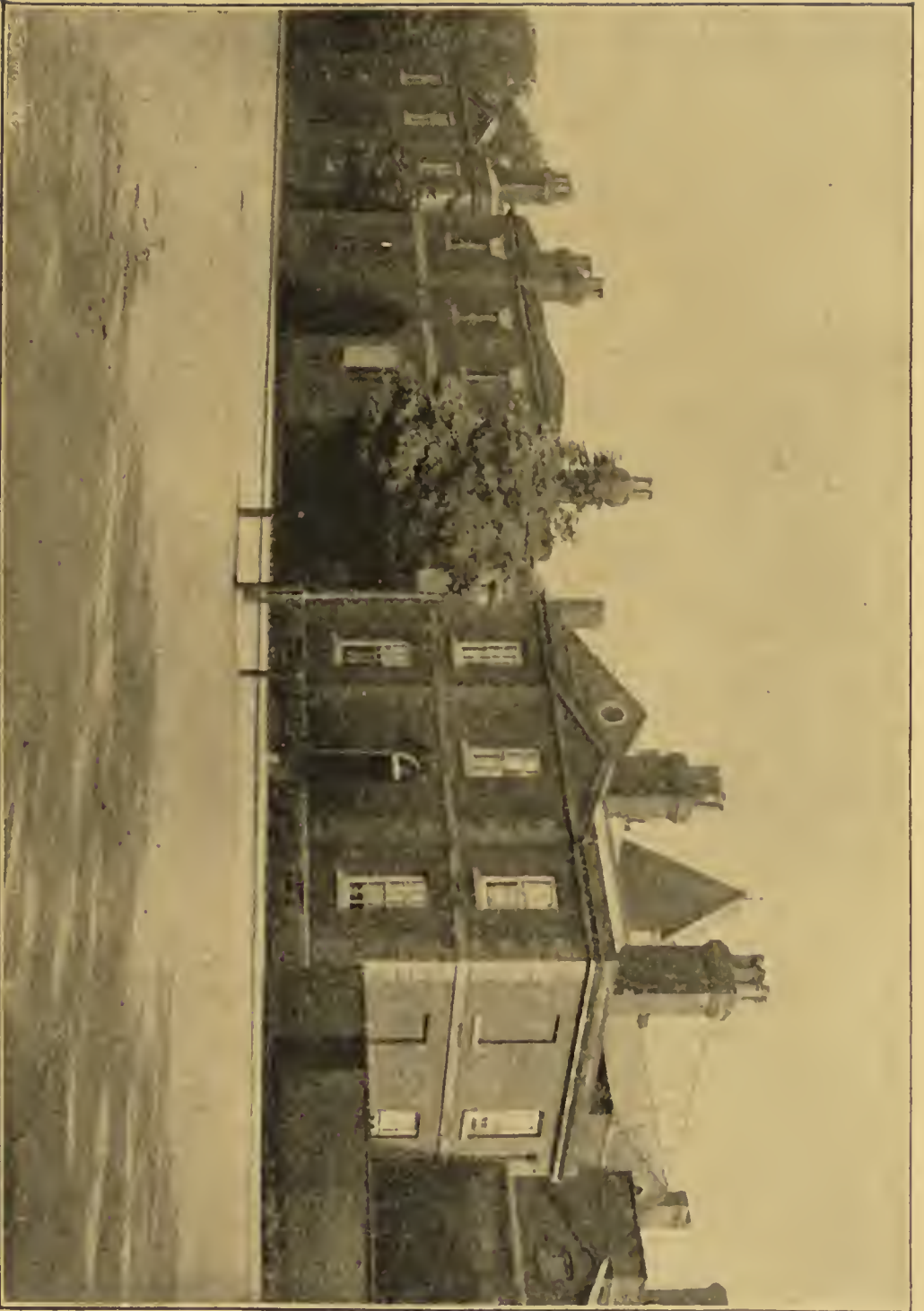
But before entering on the subject of John

Howard's foreign journeys and researches, it will be interesting to note the present condition of Bedford Gaol, as a sample of other prisons in the country.

It is not often that one particular spot in any particular place can claim to be the nursery of two men, each of whom, in his own way, revolutionised modern thought. Yet this is the case in the little, marshy Midland town, on the "river called Owze, whose seale is an eagle displayed looking to the sinister with wings inverted sable."

"From Bedford Gaol John Bunyan sent forth his pilgrim to face danger, overcome difficulties, and gain the crown of immortality, and from Bedford John Howard went forth. This was the centre from which John Howard's work diverged and radiated to different centres, and this was the anvil on which John Bunyan hammered out the experiences which act as "a religious bond to the whole of Christendom."

Very different was Bedford Gaol in 1766 from what it is now. John Howard's favourite maxim, "Make men diligent, and you will make them honest," has been of late years the basis of the system in this place, with such favourable results as have not been exceeded or equalled in any other prison in England. Come with me in fancy, and I will try to portray it for you. We will carry in our hand John Howard's pamphlet, cull his advice, and see how far it has been acted upon. High red brick walls surround the gaol on every side. No chance, now, for the riffraff of the town to make it their rendezvous. Visitors, except "on business," never go beyond the thick wooden door with iron-



BEDFORD GAOL, OF TO-DAY.
Governor's House, with the Gaol behind it.

studded wicket, a special permit from the Commissioners of Prisons being needed to enter the first and second ward. When John Howard visited the prisoners here, he saw more than prisoners gathered round the spot from which the head gaoler, by royal licence, dispensed beer to all the neighbourhood. Now no prisoners are visible at all until we stand in the spacious, lightsome, wholesome, cleanly, four-storeyed cruciform hall. "Every room should be vaulted," wrote John Howard one hundred years ago, and we gladly notice this hall has a sea-green dome, while many skylights add to its cheerfulness.

A circular staircase leads to upper tiers of cells, and each gallery is railed with feathery iron balustrades. First offenders—distinguished by a red rosette on cap and arm—are dusting the spirals and ornamentations of this ironwork. They peer cheerfully at us as we look up into this human cage, for from wall to wall strong meshed iron netting is stretched. Every open space is guarded in this way, the netting acting as a spring mattress to any would-be suicide.

"I wish to have so many *small* rooms or cabins, that each criminal may sleep alone. The doors should be iron-latticed, for the circulation of air." Thus far has Howard's wish been complied with.

Well, the little room—I can scarcely call them cells—which each prisoner now occupies is small enough, but lofty, very different from the unused portions, dating from 1766, in which John Howard took measurements, and in which

one can scarcely stand upright. In each cell is a ventilator, to let out air, and a grating, to let in heat from the hot pipes with which the prison is lined.

“There is scarce anything in the whole economy of a gaol of more importance than cleanliness. The ceilings and walls of every ward and room should be well scraped, and then washed with the best limestone, taken hot from a kiln, at least twice every year. Each room should be swept and washed every day by the respective inhabitants, and sometimes with hot vinegar. Every prisoner should be obliged to wash his hands and face, and keep himself neat. For as nastiness is a great source of infection, so cleanliness is the greatest preventive.” So writes John Howard, and we find everything spotlessly kept in these cells, from the planked floor to the plank bedstead reared on end in one corner, from the bright bell-handle to the glittering utensils for food and cleanliness. Here, too, a bracket-like table is attached to the wall, and a small wooden stool stands before it. Under a shelf is a roll, consisting of a hair mattress three inches thick, a pair of white linen sheets, two warm Whitney blankets, and a bed rug. Hung on the walls is a prayer-card, and beneath it a Bible, a Prayer-Book, a hymnal, and one book from the library. A soft towel hangs in this room, too; and there is a soap-dish, a salt-cellar, a drinking-cup, and a spoon. I also particularly noticed a copy of “Rules” in each cell, an important detail pressed by John Howard, who never saw these regulations understood or followed. Personal neat-

ness and cleanliness is assured, any neglect of the same being punished by a bread-and-water diet. "Every prisoner who comes to gaol dirty should be washed in the cold or warm bath."

The first thing, after a prisoner has walked past the flower-ribboned path up to the door and been admitted into the gaol, is an introduction to the receiving-room. This is furnished with a large long bath, and every convicted person, clean or dirty, has to give himself a good washing in it. This bath is not lined with the white china tiles found in the lavatory afterwards used by prisoners. But clean hot water, at a temperature of 86° , is turned on for every bath, and a clean drying-towel provided for every bather. The guests in His Majesty's model prison often arrive in an indescribable condition of filth. "One bath doesn't always do 'em," explained a warder. "Then they have another in an hour." The clothes provided are always clean and newly laundered, but they are not beautiful! They are made of coarse dust-coloured shoddy, stamped with the broad arrow.

After the bath a prisoner is weighed, and also on discharge. Almost invariably he is heavier on the second than on the first occasion. How different the result of incarceration in the old days, when "the poor creature's aspect (after some months of confinement) was singularly deplorable." At the Quarter Sessions prisoners, "almost famished, nearly naked, and sick of divers diseases," were often discharged, to spread infection wherever they went. *Now* there is little or no illness. In John Howard's time there were many sick and no

infirmary; now there is an infirmary, but it is seldom used. Cleanliness, segregation, discipline, regular hours and food, have brought health in their train. During three years and three months only two cases of serious illness were reported in this prison, and in both cases the disease had been contracted before entrance. A doctor attends twice a week, and a small dispensary is a feature of every gaol.

As a reformer Howard was one of the earliest advocates for segregation. He rightly condemned gaol gangs and unlimited intercourse between offenders. Nowadays every prisoner is kept to himself. No boys are now "found listening to practised and experienced criminals," for lads and men are kept quite apart. Shoemaking is taught; also laundry-work and cookery, weaving and tailoring, is all done by convicts. During twenty-one years the sum of £10,000 has been paid in cash for labour *in wages*, besides all the general work done in the prison. Looms are worked by the more intelligent, and four hundred rugs were despatched to the War Office on the day of my visit. The men also work in a large field surrounding the building. No oakum is picked, and only hardened offenders break stone.

No irons or chains are now seen on ankle or wrist, and the dark cell does not exist even in name. Punishments are adapted to the nature of the offence committed. Severe means are never resorted to unless in extreme cases, and then with great caution, and not until due and full inquiry has been made. Flogging is only employed by

magistrate's order, and the "cat" is similar to that used in the navy.

Contumacious debtors are to be seen still in the precincts of this historic pile, but their imprisonment can only last at the most for forty-two days. In place of the barbarous treatment they received one hundred years ago, they alone are allowed a certain degree of indulgence; they alone can have food sent in from the outside; and they alone are exempt from wearing prison dress, or keeping silence.

"A chapel is necessary to a gaol," runs the old book on *Proposed Improvements*. So of course there is a chapel in Bedford Gaol, carrying out, in its arrangements, all John Howard's suggestions. Daily service of a hearty devotional character is conducted, and choir practices are held at stated intervals. On the seats I noticed an anthem sung the Sunday before. It was strangely appropriate. "I will arise, I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned—have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

If the great philanthropist were living now, he would find the science of which he laid the foundation brought as near perfection as the changefulness of human opinion will allow. Yet as we look at the warm, dry, comfortable clean gaols all over England,—and Bedford is only an example of many others,—let us never forget that freedom is always left outside.

Prisons are nowadays just chess-boards of doors. A door confronts you at every few steps, and that

door is securely locked. The warder who walks with you is always unlocking before you, and heavy doors are always clashing behind you. Every cell is locked, every corridor securely barred. The prisoner is under constant supervision too. Small spy-holes—so contrived that an outsider can scan every corner without himself being seen—are bored over every locked door. Morning, noon, and night the prisoner is never secure from watchful eyes. When at even thick shadows fall over and around this historic prison, when the last meal has been partaken of, the last “all right” sentinelled, each cell is secured E-X-C-E-P-T from those eyes! Every quarter of an hour the night-watchman paces round that silent building, and can peer through every peep-hole. He wears felt-soled slippers on his feet, and the longing must be great to hide somewhere—anywhere—out of range of that watchful eye. But there is no privacy—no escape from the clashing keys, the constant supervision!

And this is what John Howard, with his strong, sound, healthy common sense, would have willed. This man, who loved mercy, and walked humbly with his God, knew also how to do justly. Cause and effect were never divorced by him. But the end of all coercion should be improvement. The best penal treatment must needs be radically preventive.

Christendom has awaked to truths preached by him in his wonderful book on the state of prisons. From love to Him we build them in an hygienic, sanitary manner; from love to Him we provide

warmth and light and cleanliness for these His erring brethren. For before and behind each improvement, each measure, each indulgence, we fancy we may hear the Master's voice, "These, too, are My brethren!"

CHAPTER IX.

PERIL AND INVESTIGATION.

The Snow-Drift—Plague and Pestilence—"Under the Shadow of the Almighty"—Foreign Systems of Punishment—Amsterdam—Russia—The Inquisition—List of Journeys.



THE scope of this little book will not allow of a detailed account of John Howard's journeys and labours. Many have taken in hand to supply this, and their works may be referred to. It is rather my purpose to interest my readers in *the man* himself, and in this chapter, therefore, I gather together accounts of some of his hairbreadth escapes from danger and death.

On one occasion John Howard was riding with his servant, John Prole, through Scotland. Heavy snowdrifts, in many cases deeper than horses or men, lay across the mountain paths. The man-servant usually rode behind his master, but on this occasion, chancing to go in front, he and his horse were buried in a snowpit. John Prole was astride a powerful beast, which managed to work a way out, a thing Mr. Howard's slighter-built horse could not have done. "All our escapes from death,

and many other dangers we were in our journey preserved from," writes John Prole, "were owing to that kind hand which, in a moment of danger, is often remarkably seen."

One day, when walking down the street at Helvoetsluis, near Amsterdam, a runaway horse threw the Englishman down. He fell on a heap of broken stone, and was picked up much bruised but with no bones broken. Six weeks of high fever followed from the pain he suffered; but at the end of that time he was able to resume his work. He did so, though he writes from Berlin on the 28th of June 1778: "The pain and fever brought on by the accident I met with in Holland made me almost despair of accomplishing my journey, or even of ever returning to England; but, through sparing mercy, I am recovered."

Coasting pleasantly along the Tuscan shores in a trading vessel, a terrible storm arose. "The air was hot, the sky clouded, the waters angry." The white squall of the Mediterranean was upon them with all its violence and peril. Every hour thunder crashed more loudly, lightning blazed more vividly, the excitement of the elements increased. "The frail barque was dashed about in the tempest like a piece of wreckage, entirely at its mercy." For three days and nights—with a case of plague on board, and so refused all anchorage—this little vessel rocked on the wide waste of water. Then, suddenly, there was a great calm. All that was most beautiful in nature lay quiet in the balmy delicious air, and the exhausted voyagers were safe.

In Constantinople John Howard lived for a

month in the midst of a plague-stricken people. On every side—literally as well as metaphorically—he saw the smitten fall dead. Yet from his visits into pest-houses and infected caravanserais, whither physicians and guides alike refused to follow, he emerged with only a “scorching pain and heavy headache,” which an hour’s fresh air invariably drove away.

After leaving Modon, in the Morea, in a vessel bound for Venice, another wonderful escape from death took place. A Barbary privateer chased and fired at them with great fury. Worse slavery than that of the Bastille stared John Howard in the face as he fought on the deck of that little vessel, helping to defend himself and the Venetian sailors with desperate courage.

There was only one gun on board. This John Howard rammed almost to the muzzle with nails, spikes, and bits of iron, and discharged broadside into the privateer as she came close at hand. This, as he himself writes, “made a dreadful slaughter.” A big hole was rent in the vessel’s side, and the corsairs, dismayed, made off as fast as they could.

From many other dangers John Howard was delivered. Once the cabin of a ship in which he was sailing was knee-deep in water. At another time his vessel nearly beat on the rocky shore of North Africa. Disease and death stared him in the face over and over again, but he never feared. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” To this man, as he said, “the way to

heaven from Grand Cairo is as near as from London, and it is not a matter of serious concern to me whether I lay down my life in Turkey, in Egypt, in Asia Minor, or elsewhere. My whole endeavour is to fulfil, according to the ability of so weak an instrument, the will of that Gracious Providence who has condescended to raise in me a firm persuasion that I am employed in what is consonant to His Divine will."

We have had a glimpse of some of the horrors John Howard found and rectified in our home system of imprisonment. I will now sketch a few scenes from his inquiries on the Continent.

In contrast to English custom, the foreign system of giving employment to prisoners was found worthy of note. "As their crimes had been aggressions upon society," says one writer, "so, under the surveillance of the corporate body which they had wronged, were they compelled to make atonement for, and compensation by their labour in rough, hard, menial work." The greater part were occupied in cleaning streets, mending highways, making roads, and work of a similar character. The prison system in Switzerland was foremost as a curative and reformatory one.

In Holland administration of punishment was carried on upon very enlightened principles, moral and religious instruction being given to each prisoner with very successful results. In Berlin the gaols were well ordered, healthy, and clean; while in Prussia there were no torture chambers.

The pleasantest picture of the penitentiary system on the Continent is given us in an account

of the rasp,¹ or spinning house, in Amsterdam. Here the women spun wool and flax, and carded and wound hair, and the men were employed in rasping logwood and making fishing-nets. They were all healthy and clean. They wore brown coats and gowns, and their shirts, aprons, stockings, and kerchiefs were white and clean.

"I saw them go from work to dinner," says Howard. "The keeper, or *father*, as they call him, presided. First they sang a psalm; then they went down in order to a neat dining-room, where they seated themselves at two tables, and several dishes of boiled barley, agreeably sweetened, were set before them. The father struck with a hammer; then, in profound silence, all stood up, and one of them read, with propriety, a prayer, about four or five minutes. They then sat down cheerful; and each filled his bowl from a large dish which contained enough for four of them. Then one brought, on a waiter, slices of bread and butter, and served each prisoner."

In another part of the house, where the women, "some of whom had been most abandoned," were found, "the mother was seated at a desk (where she had a full view of her family at work) with a Bible before her." John Howard remarks on "the timid modesty" and cheerfulness of these poor women, and ascribes it to the power of that Book open before the mother of the Spin house.

Yet there were terrible and dark blotches on the

¹ Rasphouse: so called from the work carried on by the male prisoners. To "rasp" wood means to grind it into powder for dyeing.

prison charts of these foreign countries. I will mention a few.

On a hot August morning a large circle of military, dressed in the grey coats and big head-cap of the Russian army, were drawn up in a square in St. Petersburg. It had taken fifteen hussars and ten soldiers to drag thither a wretched man and woman to suffer the torture of the knout. Amongst the spectators stood a little, dapper, keen-faced Englishman, with a notebook in his hand. He looked on as first the woman, and then the man, were roughly stripped to the waist, and bound with outstretched arms and legs to two posts. He watched as the executioner bared his strong muscular arm, and taking a many-thonged whip into his hand, tested it by cracking it in the air. This "knout" was attached to a short handle, and ended in a tapering point which could cut into the flesh.

There was presumably no capital punishment in Russia; yet as we read of thick thongs scoring the woman's tender back twenty-five times, each time carrying away with it large pieces of flesh, and spattering the ground with blood, we do not wonder that prisoners so dreaded the punishment of the knout that they often bribed the executioner to kill them with the first few strokes.

John Howard had been voluntarily shown all the instruments of punishment used in a Russian prison—the axe, the block, the machine for breaking arms and legs, the instrument for slitting nostrils, the mark for branding, the cat-whip, and

the knout. But the unexpected sight of that August morning nearly drove him wild. The roll of drum, the pretence of prayer, only aggravated his indignation.

Getting at once into a coach, he followed the executioner to his lonely little home on the banks of the Neva. Descending the steps with a haughty air, the Englishman assumed an official tone and demanded truthful answers to any questions he might put. The man was quite cowed, domiciliary visits in Russia rarely boding any good to the host.

"Can you inflict the knout in such a manner as to cause death in a very short time?" asked Howard.

"Yes, I can," was the quick answer.

"In how short a time?"

"In a day or so, or even immediately," was the confession.

"Have you ever so inflicted it?"

"I have."

"*Lately?*" questioned our countryman.

"Yes; the man I have just punished has died under it."

John Howard had suspected this—the poor prisoner, after suffering sixty of those awful blows, had been hastily lifted away.

"In what manner do you thus render it mortal?" he continued, when emotion enabled him to speak.

"By one or two strokes on the sides, which carry off large pieces of the flesh."

"Do you receive *orders* thus to inflict the punishment?"

"I do," was the answer.

No wonder that John Howard could write on his return: "In Russia the peasants and servants are bondmen or slaves, and their lords (or masters) may inflict on them any corporal punishment, or banish them to Siberia, on giving notice of their offence to the police. They are not permitted to put them to death. *Should they, however, die by the severity of their punishment, the penalty of the law is easily evaded.* The punishment of the knout seldom causes immediate death, but death is often the consequence of it."

Besides this terrible torture and the others mentioned, John Howard found the cells in all Russia dens of horror, where old and young of both sexes, guilty and innocent, were huddled together in darkness and misery, without sufficient air and without sufficient food, heavily ironed, and without hope.

Nor was Russia the only country in which such cruelties were practised. The very name of the Inquisition is one that suggests every possible kind of torture. John Howard was allowed to see something of it at Valladolid. He saw the walls hung with red, the painted cap and vestments of the victims, the robe and stool, the double doors, the triple locks, and he saw the prison guard—a huge mastiff dog. He was told that from this court there was NO APPEAL.

"Let me be confined but for a month," pleaded the courageous Englishman. "Treat me as you treat the other prisoners, and let me see what is behind this severity and secrecy."

“Confinement in the Holy Inquisition is never for a shorter term than three years. Even then, before release, an oath of secrecy must be taken,” was the reply.

We can fancy the gesture with which John Howard turned away. He knew that certain dark funnel-like passages were honeycombed with cells, and that in those “pitiless, bedless, seatless, lightless, breathless, and almost foodless cells,” at that very time, many victims were existing. He knew that secrecy always covers unutterable horrors. But his appeal was in vain. “None but prisoners ever enter these rooms,” quoth his guide, as he hurried the visitor along to the street.

“I could not but observe,” wrote John Howard, “that even the sight of the building struck terror into the common people as they passed. It is styled, by a monstrous abuse of words, the *holy* and *apostolic* Inquisition.”

In Osnaburg the custom of torture was still prevalent, and such torture that John Howard could not bear to mention it to the Prince Bishop who ruled over it. The details were all too shocking. “If I had chosen, I could have filled a book with the infinite variety of tortures practised in Europe.”

I must follow his example, for a lengthened description would be of no practical utility. I close, instead, with a list of the journeys our great philanthropist undertook during the seventeen years he spent in travel for the amelioration of the state of prisoners. It will give some idea of the herculean labours undertaken by the little frail

man who lived on vegetables and cared not for rest:—

1773. He was made Sheriff, and visited many town and county gaols.

1774. Completed his survey of English prisons.

1775. Travelled in Scotland, Ireland, France, Holland, Flanders, and Germany.

1776. Repeated his visits to the above countries and to Switzerland, besides revisiting all the English gaols.

1777. Printed his *State of Prisons*.

1778. Travelled through Holland, Flanders, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and part of France.

1779. Revisited all the counties of England and Wales. Travelled in Scotland and Ireland. Acted as supervisor of the penitentiary houses.

1780. Printed his First Appendix.

1781. Travelled into Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Germany, and Holland.

1782. Again surveyed all the English gaols, and went to Scotland and Ireland.

1783. Visited Portugal, Spain, France, and Holland; also Scotland and Ireland; and viewed several English prisons.

1784. Printed Second Appendix, and a new edition of the whole work.

1785. } From the close of the first of these years to
1786. } the beginning of the last, was on his
1787. } tour through Holland, France, Italy,
Malta, Turkey, and Germany; went also
to Scotland and Ireland.

1788. Revisited Ireland, and during this year travelled all over England.

1789. Printed his work on Lazarettos, etc. Travelled through Holland, Germany, Prussia, and Livonia, to Russia and Lesser Tartary.

And on January the twentieth of the following year came the Last Journey of this intrepid traveller.

CHAPTER X.

ADVENTURE AND SUCCESS.

The Black Wig—The Travelling Physician—Marseilles—The Fop at Toulon—The Bastille—In High Places—An Emperor, a Pope, and a Countess—The Thanks of Parliament—Wesley.



JUST about the year 1785 a diligence, in which sat two passengers, was rumbling along the high road from Brussels to Paris. One of the two men wore the full-bottomed wig, three-cornered cap, and yellow and black robe of a French physician; the other had nothing to distinguish him but a black wig, a thing seldom seen in those days. The usual civilities passed between these two passengers, but the face of the elder was lined with care and thought, and he rather repelled than courted familiarity.

It was a dark and wintry night when they arrived in the capital. The French physician stepped briskly out of the coach, and, shouldering his own portmanteau, made off for an obscure inn some distance from their halting-place. The man in a black wig followed, but only took note of his companion's destination and then went elsewhere.

A few hours afterwards the French doctor was roused out of his first sleep by a loud rapping at his chamber-door. Stepping out of bed, he unlocked it, and then went calmly back, calling out "*Entrez.*"

The chambermaid entered, in response to this invitation, carrying two candles, and followed by a tall man in black, with a sword dangling at his side and his hands in an enormous muff.

"Is your name John Howard?" asked this official.

In perfect idiomatic French the answer came boldly :

"Yes! What of that?"

The officer did not answer. Instead, he bowed in a stately fashion and asked another question :

"Have you just come from Brussels in a diligence, in company with a man in a black wig?"

The physician looked sharply at his interrogator ; then answered, just as sharply :

"I came to Paris in the Brussels diligence ; but as to the black wig, I neither care nor know anything about it."

The man in black appeared satisfied, and, merely saying "*Au revoir,*" he withdrew.

John Howard—for it was indeed none other than our Englishman masquerading under a disguise—knew well what that implied return meant. He knew that perpetual and horrible confinement in the pestilential, vermin - filled dungeons of the Bastille would quickly follow. He was on his way to Marseilles to inspect the famous quarantine establishment there ; and not only travelling without a passport, but in actual

defiance of express commands issued by the Government of France. Our own Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lord Carmarthen, had failed to get leave for his countryman to inspect the lazaretto, or, indeed, to enter France at all. He did so at his own peril, and had doubtless been "shadowed" from Holland by the black-wigged spy of the French police.

No wonder John Howard quickly left his bed, and, throwing on his clothes, shouldered his trunk again and quitted the inn.

He had not been asleep long, for it was only one o'clock as he stepped down a quiet street and took shelter in a portico. The dim glare of an oil lamp showed that this *cul-de-sac* was clear, and here he determined to wait until it was time to start south.

When at last the police raided the inn, they found their bird had flown; and long before daybreak John Howard was rattling over the cobble-stones of a distant suburb of Paris. The short time the bloodhounds of the law had been obliged to wait, in order to get the warrant of arrest signed by Monsieur Le Noir, had enabled our philanthropist to give them the slip.

It was well that John Howard had really studied medicine in Stoke Newington many years before, for danger of discovery was not all over when they left Paris behind them. A lady in the diligence was taken suddenly ill, and of course the supposed doctor was called upon to prescribe for and to attend her. We do not know what the seizure was, or what Howard prescribed, but his treatment was so eminently successful that it

brought him in a very troublesome accession of practice. Numbers of patients presented themselves as he travelled on, and, as he afterwards remarked, "perhaps among the number of empirics I did as little mischief as most of them."

All this lessened the danger of detection as John Howard made his perilous journey along the great white high road which is one of the arteries of France. But it was critical work. Well for him that his acquaintance with medicine was no superficial one. On one occasion he was called upon to bring a babe into the world; on another, to order a sea-bath, plaisters of salt and vinegar, and a cooling regimen to a young man whose body was "prodigiously swelled from head to foot."

At Marseilles this French physician was told that no strangers were allowed to see the galleys or arsenals, especially no Englishman; but of course there was nothing to bar the way of a French physician on tour. So, though advised by his only friend and adviser, M. Durand, to leave at once, as he was being searched for in all directions, John Howard managed to get into the sealed lazaretto, and to make his plans and drawings. Here he saw papers dipped in a bucket of vinegar at the end of a pair of tongs; here he saw iron-shuttered windows and iron-wired palings, closets for infected persons, and all the precautions taken to secure an open port for this commercial centre of France.

This was not the only occasion on which the dauntless reformer had to purchase and wear a disguise. Whilst he was in Marseilles he heard

that an English Protestant was confined in a certain prison at Toulon. All access to this prison was strictly forbidden, transgression of the order being confinement to the galleys for life. John Howard went to Toulon and made himself acquainted, by all-round questioning, with the several turnings and windings that led to the prison.



HOWARD AT THE PRISON GATE.

The next day a French exquisite of the Faubourg St. Honore, with his hat under his arm, walked quietly past twenty-four officers grouped together on guard and made his way into the prison. Not one of them suspected that the bright-eyed, sallow-faced, vivacious - mannered little man was anything but a French fop until afterwards. Then, to their chagrin, they learned that the

famous John Howard had passed into the interdicted prison under their very noses, had interviewed the English gentleman in his own cell, and had reported on the matter to the English Consul at Lyons.

Before this information reached them, however, the philanthropist, having gained his point, had hastily left the city and was safely in Nice. From this city, knowing his daring efforts were impossible of concealment, he took passage in a vessel to Genoa, for return through France was impossible.

On another occasion his attempt to enter the prison was not so successful, though equally daring. The name "Bastille" recalls many scenes of terrorism, hardship, and bloodshed even in these days, when the terror has ceased to exist for over a century. In the day of its power it was a very focus of cruelty. Just before John Howard died, the French populace themselves, enraged at the memories and stories of the miseries endured in the old castle, rose as one man, and pulled down the ramparts and dug up the foundations of the prison.

This most formidable of castles boasted of eight towers and four bridges, walls of ten feet thickness, and innumerable dungeons. Before one of the strong double-doors, sheeted with iron, and with large bolts let into enormous locks, one morning stood John Howard. Behind those doors were the various chambers of horrors called *oubliettes* and *culottes* (scull-caps). The usual armed sentinels were not on the spot, so with much boldness the



THE BASTILLE.

little Englishman pushed back the leaves and made his way over the portcullis. But, alas for those French prisoners! he got no farther. Very quickly he was followed, and turned back as, with notebook in hand, he was beginning to draw a plan of the place. He was seized and hustled from the spot by an officer, and it was well for him that the guards were too sensible of their own neglect of duty to arrest him. If he had been locked up in the noisome and bloodstained cells of this most terrible place, we should never have heard of him again.

But though denied access to the Bastille, John Howard managed to get possession of a pamphlet describing the prison. Even this was a matter of no small difficulty, as the sale of it in France was prohibited under the severest penalties. John Howard, in his pepper-and-salt suit, scarlet waistcoat, and cocked hat might as well have asked for the moon as for a copy; but one day a French peasant, clad in a short skirt, huge white cap, and blue cloak, came clattering up in her sabots to a little second-hand shop in Paris. Hanging on her arm was a basket of fruit, and she was evidently desirous of buying paper to wrap up her merchandise. A good-sized pamphlet was amongst her purchases, and after securing it she quickly left the shop and was lost to sight.

A short time afterwards John Howard, who "after many efforts," as he himself says, had under this disguise been "fortunate enough to secure it, brought the pamphlet to England, though not without hazard." After translating it into English, he gave

the world a full knowledge of this "Inquisition Françoise." Therein had been imprisoned and executed some of France's most noble sons. Marshals, peers, admirals, chevaliers, dukes, old and young, rich and poor, had all passed their lives in this place; but the key of knowledge unlocked the secrets of the Bastille, and its demolition soon followed.

It would only needlessly harrow the feelings of my readers to describe horrors witnessed by the philanthropist in all parts of the world—the knout in Russia, the axe in Holland, the Inquisition in Spain, the fires in Italy, must have branded themselves into the memory of tender-hearted Howard. We see him interviewing executioners, gaolers, torturers, until we wonder how he retained his reason.

Everything was methodically and calmly committed to paper. "Systematically," as Burke said, "to collate the distresses of all mankind" was the work he attempted and did. On his return to England the precious MS. was given into the hands of his friend Dr. Aikin, who assisted in its revision. When any apparent hiatus or discrepancy existed in the memorandum, the author would start off to revisit the spot described, so as to be perfectly accurate in the matter.

But we pass on, to see the Prisoner's Friend in high places.

In a little apartment in a palace in Vienna stood two men. It was only nine o'clock on a Christmas morning, and the rising sun was still gilding the waters of the river running beside the palace. One of the couple was a large, splendidly-

made man, attired in a gorgeous uniform. The other was little and meagre—dressed in a snuff-coloured travelling suit, and wearing a small bagwig. There was no mirror in the room to reflect the strangely-assorted pair, no chair to sit down upon; but one of those men was His Imperial Majesty Francis Joseph of Austria. The other was John Howard.

Very earnestly the two conversed. Francis Joseph was listening to some home truths, and the fearless little man before him was talking as unconcernedly and plainly as possible. "Speak without fear," the Emperor had said when they first met. So the faithful monitor obeyed.

"I see many things in your prisons that fill me with astonishment and grief. They all have dungeons. Torture is said to be abolished in your Majesty's dominions. It is only so in appearance. What is now practised is in reality worse than any torture."

The monarch fidgeted uneasily, and carried the war abruptly into the enemy's camp:

"Sir! in your country they hang for the slightest offence."

John Howard looked into the face opposite, and paused. Then he said vehemently:

"I declare I would rather be hanged, if it were possible, ten times over than undergo such a continuance of suffering as the unhappy beings endure who have the misfortune to be confined in your Majesty's prisons."

It was plain speaking, and not so long before would have cost the philanthropist his head. But

it had a different effect now. "The Emperor shook me by the hand, and said I had given him much pleasure. He freely and openly conversed with me afterwards for two hours. I admire his condescension and affability, his thirst and desire to do good, and to strike out great objects."

Not "with soft and flattering speech" had Howard pleaded for the prisoner. He had made definite statements and given definite directions. Many of these were followed, for he afterwards ascertained that orders were issued at once to rectify evils he had pointed out.

This was not the only occasion John Howard was to be seen in high quarters, though he was the last man to court royal favour. The Prince Bishop of Osnaburg, the Czar of all the Russias, the Queen of Hungary, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany were among those he interviewed. A touching incident happened at the close of an unceremonial visit to the Pontiff of Rome. Taking the philanthropist by the hand, His Holiness Pius VI., the Head of the greatest Church in Christendom, said gently :

"I know you Englishmen do not value these things, but the blessing of an old man can do you no harm."

Far different was his reception by a certain German countess. Being told that the prisons in her husband's province were "the worst in all Germany," she indignantly left the room, refusing to heed Howard's recommendation to visit them personally, in order to prove the truth of his words. "*I go to prison!*" she said as she passed

out of the door. And this naturally provoked the unmoved retort:

“Madam, remember that you are a woman yourself, and must soon, like the most miserable female prisoner in a dungeon, inhabit but a small space of that earth from which you originated.”

It was not only foreign princes who vied with each other in honouring the reformer. Our own House of Commons summoned him to appear before them. The ugly benches which then crowded its floor were filled with members to hear and see the little man. Mr. Speaker, in his scarlet robes, occupied his pulpit-like chair; Lord North, as Premier, the Solicitor-General, and many others were gathered round the plainly-dressed traveller, who, hat in hand, bowed quietly before them. Question and answer followed quickly. It seemed so extraordinary to one member that anyone could do so much without payment that he asked: “At whose expense do you travel?”

The answer was thick with indignant emotions, but concise as usual.

“My own,” said the man who had spent over £30,000 on his philanthropic labours.

“The honour of their thanks” was then unanimously given by the nation’s representatives in the name of the nation; and John Howard retired, after receiving an honour seldom accorded by Parliament to anyone.

The city of Dublin was not behind London in testifying her regard. After his tour of inspection in Ireland, the honorary degree of LL.D. was

added to his list of honours by the university of the Irish capital.

Of all the meetings that took place, however, between John Howard and his contemporaries, none was more interesting than that between the philanthropist and John Wesley. Under the shadow of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, commonly called Christchurch, met these two celebrated men "beloved of God." The result of that interview was to encourage John Howard in his manifold labours.

"I was encouraged," he said, "to go on vigorously with my designs. I saw in him how much a single man may achieve by zeal and perseverance, and I thought, 'Why may I not do as much in my way as Mr. Wesley has done in his, if I am only as persevering and assiduous?' and I determined I would pursue my work with more alacrity than ever."

After a second interview John Wesley writes of him whom he thought "one of the greatest men in Europe": "Mr. Howard is really an extraordinary man; God has raised him up to be a blessing to many nations. Nothing but the mighty power of God can enable him to go through his difficult and dangerous employments." So these two men, resembling each other so much in appearance and habits, met and parted, to meet only again when each had passed the dark river and been given the victor's crown.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAST JOURNEY.

Farewells to Cardington—Making a Will—The Eighth in Succession—Signing the Covenant—The Last Patient—Admiral Priestman—Last Messages—The King's Call.



“ I AM travelling from one country to another, and I trust, with some good hope, through abundant grace, to a yet better.”

The man who spoke thus took a sorrowful leave of his friends on the eve of his last journey abroad. The shadow of the grave was over his spirit as he walked round the schools and other institutions at Cardington, commending them to the oversight of his pastor, Mr. Smith, of Bedford. It was upon him as, with old Joshua Crockford, he strolled round the beautiful garden he had laid out and planted with such care, and took a parting glance at the fir trees his dead wife had set, at the walk which he had paced that anxious morning when little John was born, or sat for a few moments in the well-kept root-house, with its hanging lamp and bookshelves. It was still upon him as he called upon his tenants,

leaving at each cottage little presents, which are still religiously preserved. It was upon him when he gave his faithful servant, John Prole, two horses, and pointed out the spot where he wished to be buried if he died in England, leaving directions that not more than £10 was to be spent on his funeral.

Of one person alone could he take no farewell. Young John Howard, his only beloved son, was slowly dying in an asylum for lunatics in Leicester, and could not be visited. "I am glad his mother is dead," quoth the sorrowful old father, as he gazed at Henrietta's grave with tear-dimmed eyes. Then he turned away—for ever.

In London, urged by his friend Mr. Whitbread, John Howard called upon his lawyer and made his will. Seven lives were named after the precarious one of his son's. Then he paused.

"These are all probably short tenures," remonstrated the solicitor, as he wrote the list. "Have you no one else you can put in?"

"No; no one," answered the philanthropist half sadly; "our chain of friends was not a long one. But"—At this moment Mr. Whitbread entered the room, and the lawyer, pointing his pen at him, said laughingly:

"Your friend here had a second baby boy last week. Why not put him in?"

So the name of Samuel Charles Whitbread was added as eighth on the succession; and it was Samuel Charles Whitbread who next became owner of Cardington Manor House.

Howard had still to take farewell of his intimate

friends, some of whom had stood by him since boyhood. His schoolfellow, Dr. Price, was old and infirm. They were never likely to meet again. No wonder the parting was pathetic and affectionate. There was also Dr. Aikin, his coadjutor in many works of literary fame, and almost a brother in love, as he might have been in law if his sister, Mrs. Barbauld, had smiled on a widower's suit, and many others. To one he said, "If we never meet each other more below, I trust we shall meet in heaven." To another, "You will probably never see me again." To a third, "We shall soon meet in heaven, and the way to heaven from Grand Cairo is as near as from London." And to a fourth, "I am going a very arduous journey. Probably, my friend, we shall never meet any more in this world; but it is the path of duty; and, with respect to myself, I am quite resigned to the will of God."

Thus this good man seemed to have private intimation that his soul was about to be required of him. He anticipated danger in every quarter, —Cairo, Turkey, Egypt, Asia Minor,—but he never looked for death where he found him, on the lone, snowy steppes of Russia.

The last good-bye said in Cardington was to the lady's-maid, who had become wife to the faithful servant who accompanied him. To Mrs. Prole he gave a tea-caddy and a miniature of her beloved dead mistress, Henrietta Howard. The thoughtful assurances he gave of his interest in her and all his dependants was very touching. On the morning of his departure, as the horses curveted and pranced before the latticed open

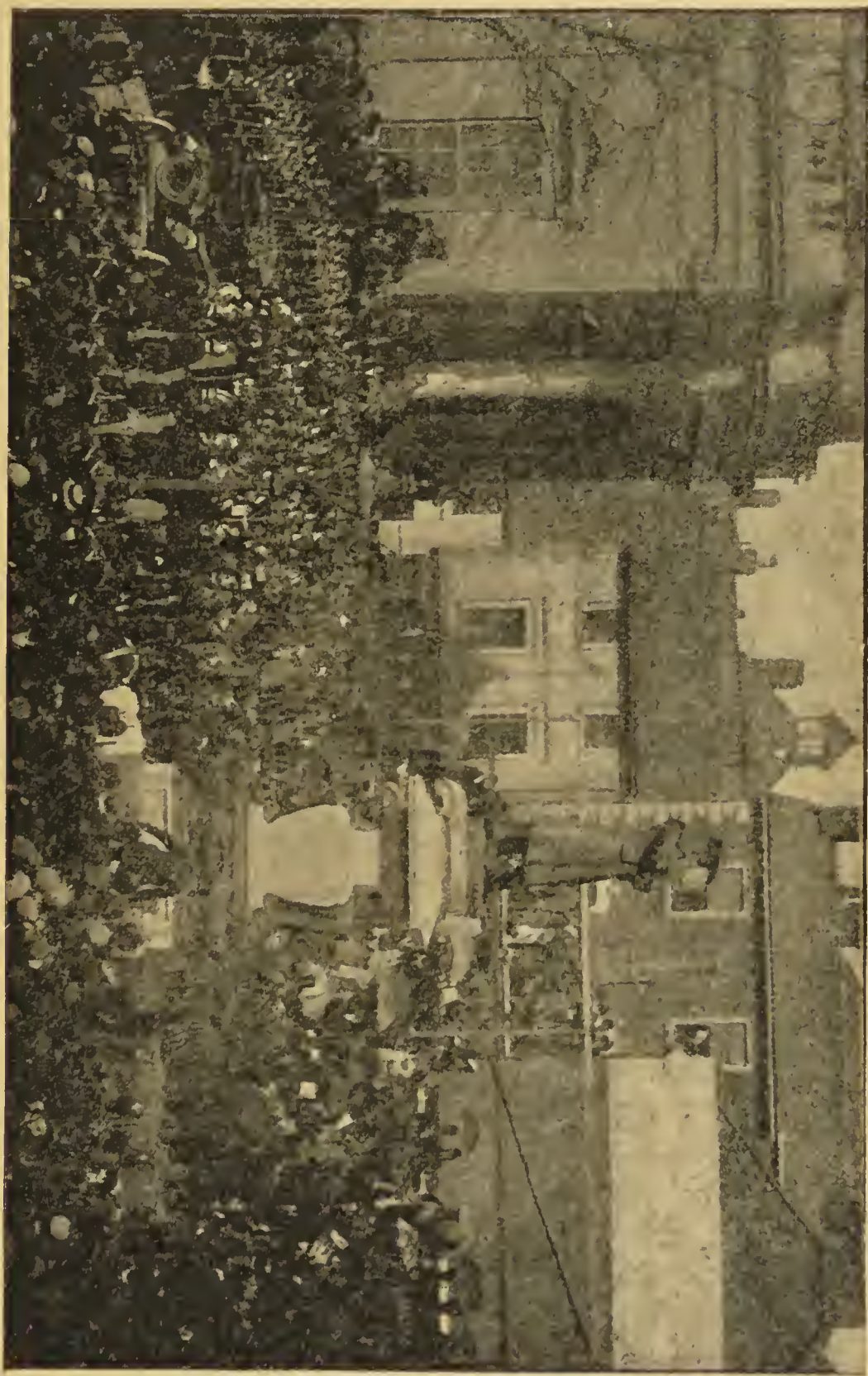
door, under the shadow of the old church, he slipped a "guinny" into the same person's hand, saying, "I must take your husband away from you for a little while, but here is something as a recompense for his loss of time."

I have seen this guinea. It is a precious heirloom in the good woman's family.

In London John Prole left his master to the care of another servant, Thomasson. This man retained his master's favour to the last, though sadly unworthy of it. We know that it was Thomas Thomasson who secretly led young John Howard into the habits of debauchery that were his ruin, mentally and physically. But John Howard never would believe this. He left him an annuity of £10 a year for life, and it was his unworthy fingers that closed the philanthropist's eyes in far-off Cherson.

It was a fine, hot morning in July 1789 that John Howard "cheerfully" set out on his last journey. All partings were behind. He was pressing on to better things. It was no *Via Dolorosa* his feet were pressing. "My medical knowledge," he wrote from Moscow, "gives me but little hope of escaping the plague in Turkey, *but my spirits do not fail me.*" But plague was not the messenger sent to tell this faithful servant that the King of the country to which he was bound could not do without him any longer. A war was raging between the Sultan and the Czar. Accounts of miseries endured by the Russian military induced Howard to cross the dreary tracts of desert between Moscow and the Black Sea, and inquire into

THE UNVEILING OF THE HOWARD STATUE AT BEDFORD.



the matter. Bundles of medicine the good man carried in his sleigh, rolls of lint, and numberless bandages. Over one thousand miles he drove through the deserts of Tartary, sometimes under the light of the moon, more often in a clear darkness, with a thermometer standing at 48° . He saw indescribable squalor and wretchedness at every point of the route; and so sure was he that he would not survive the hardships of his last journey, that he solemnly resigned his covenant with God made in 1766. It was just twenty-three years since he had drawn it up, on a Sunday night in Antwerp.

The story of his death is but as a crown to the story of his life. Amongst the sufferers from a sudden and malignant outbreak of fever in Cherson, brought by the soldiers from Bender, was a young lady of sixteen, who craved for attendance from the celebrated English physician. At first Howard refused. His work was amongst the poor, not the rich. But the natural kindness of his heart prevailed. He went twenty-four miles, saw the patient, and prescribed for her.

About eight days afterwards a letter, which had been delayed in transit by tempestuous weather, was put into his hands. The patient was no better. Would the kind Englishman come again? It was a pouring wet and bitterly cold night. Without waiting to change his clothes for suitable outdoor apparel, the philanthropist mounted an old dray horse standing near and rode off.

The young girl was passing away as the good man, soaked to the skin, hurried into the room

and tried to feel her pulse. Wearied and worn out, fasting as he was, a sudden offensive effluvium struck his nostril. Acquainted with every source of contagion and affection, Howard knew that he had caught the fever. His destiny was sealed. He kept about for a few days longer, and then he lay down to die.

One morning, to a newly-made but true friend, Admiral Priestman, who was trying to enliven him, he said solemnly : “ Priestman, you style this a dull conversation, and endeavour to divert my mind from dwelling on death. I entertain very different sentiments. Death has no terror for me ; it is an event I have always looked forward to with cheerfulness, if not with pleasure. Be assured the subject is more grateful to me than any other. I am well aware that I have but a short time to live. My mode of life has rendered it impossible that I should get rid of this fever. If I had lived as you do, eating heartily of animal food and drinking wine, I might, perhaps, by altering my diet, be able to subdue it. But how can such a man as I am lower his diet, who has been accustomed for years to live upon vegetables and water, a little bread, and a little tea ? I have no method of lowering my nourishment, and therefore I must die.”

Then he cheerfully gave instructions where he was to be buried. “ There is a spot,” said he, “ near the village of Dauphiné. This would suit me nicely. You know it well, for I have often said I should like to be buried there ; and let me beg of you, as you value your old friend, not to suffer any

pomp to be used at my funeral; nor any monument, nor monumental inscription whatsoever, to mark where I am laid. Lay me quietly in the earth, place a sundial over my grave, and let me be forgotten."

Very patient and quiet lay the dying man after this, his lips moving often in silent prayer. He was nearing the Better Land. Nearly all earthly things were past.

Then restlessness seized him. He would not be content until Admiral Priestman left the room to see if the French gentleman in whose garden he wished to be buried would give him the ground. He had not been gone long when a letter was brought in containing better news of the poor mad boy left behind in Leicester.

Thomasson read out the opinion that young John was really saner, and would be able to welcome his father back to England. The dying man was much affected, and his expressions of delight were particularly strong. Turning his head to look at Thomasson, he said, "Tell my dear boy, if ever, by God's blessing, he is restored to his reason, how much and how fervently I have prayed for his happiness in this my last illness." When Admiral Priestman returned, with the intelligence that his place of interment was secured, his countenance brightened, and a gleam of satisfaction came over his face. Immediately he laid *that* matter aside; but turning his languid head on the pillow, he gave his friend the cheerful letter to read, adding, "Is not that comfort for a dying father?"

A few hours of delirium followed, and John

Howard spoke for the last time. Perhaps it was with the memory of the two funerals at which he had been chief mourner in his mind—the one at Stoke Newington, and that last heart-breaking one in Cardington: “Do not let the Greek priests touch me,” he said urgently. “Do you read the burial service of the Church of England over me.” A fit came on almost immediately afterwards, and at about eight o’clock in the morning of the 20th of January, 1790, the great philanthropist breathed his last.

It was a clear, cold morning. Stretches of unbroken snow lay round the house to which death had come. With only strangers round his bed, one thousand five hundred miles from his native land, John Howard lay asleep. From the Russian steppe his soul had gone to the region of which the Lord has said: “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE HONOURED DEAD.

A Voice of Mourning—The Memorial in St Paul's—The Funeral—
The Statue at Bedford—An Indelible Record.



HOWARD'S death was not only a national event, but a European loss.

The last scene of "this strange eventful history" was enacted in Russia, and the voice of mourning was heard from the banks of the Dnieper, from the capitals of Germany, France, and Austria, until it reached the grey shores of the Thames. "Place a sundial over my grave, and let me be forgotten," had been the hero's last direction; but amidst the smoke and din of London a new National Cathedral opened its door for its first monument to the famous dead. That statue was not that of statesman, warrior, or even of sovereign. It was that of John Howard. Perhaps no man has assuaged so much human misery, and John Howard rightly took his place at one corner of the dome of St. Paul's, the genuine apostle of Him among whose titles to our veneration and love not the least befitting, not the least glorious, was that "He went about doing good."

John Howard would have no flattering epitaph over his grave. His friend, Mr. Whitbread the statesman, composed the one in the Cathedral. It runs as follows:—

This extraordinary Man had the Fortune to be
 honoured whilst living,
 In the manner which his Virtues deserved :
 He received the Thanks
 of both Houses of the British and Irish Parliaments
 For his Eminent Services rendered to his Country and to Mankind.
 Our National Prisons and Hospitals,
 Improved upon the Suggestions of his Wisdom,
 Bear Testimony to the solidity of his Judgment
 And to the Estimation in which he was held
 In Every Part of the Civilised World,
 Which he traversed to reduce the sum of Human Misery.
 From the Throne to the Dungeon his Name was mentioned
 with Respect, Gratitude, and Admiration,
 His Modesty alone
 Defeated various efforts that were made during his Life
 To erect this Statue,
 which the Publick has now consecrated to his Memory.

He was born at Hackney, in the County of Middlesex,
 Sept ii. MDCCXXVI.
 The early Part of his Life he spent in Retirement,
 Residing principally upon his Paternal Estate,
 At Cardington, in Bedfordshire ;
 For which County he served the Office of Sheriff
 In the Year MDCCLXXIII.
 He expired at Cherson, in Russian Tartary, on the
 xxth of Jan. MDCCXC.,
 A Victim to the perilous and benevolent Attempt
 To ascertain the Cause of, and find an efficacious Remedy
 For the Plague.
 He trod an open but unfrequented path to Immortality,
 In the ardent and unintermitted Exercise of
 Christian Charity.
 May this Tribute to his Fame
 Excite an Emulation of his truly glorious Achievement.



THE HOWARD STATUE IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

John Howard wished no pomp to be used at his funeral, yet the people honoured him with a public one, amidst general mourning. On the day appointed for his interment, thousands assembled to witness it. The coffin was placed on a bier drawn by six horses. The carriages of the Prince of Moldavia, Admiral Priestman, Admiral Mordomof (each drawn by the same number of horses), the General and Staff Officers of the garrison, and the Cherson Magistrates and Merchants, followed the remains. A large body of cavalry attended, with other persons on horseback and two or three thousand on foot.

Slaves, prisoners, sailors, soldiers, peasants, whose physician he had gratuitously been, dropped tears into the pit, and marvelled much why he, a stranger to them, had left his home and friends and country to become the unpaid servant of the poor in a land so far away.

It is difficult to describe the effect which the mournful news produced in England. From pulpit, press, bar, and parliament flowed tributes of respect. His death was announced in the *London Gazette* of the 23rd March, a distinction never before given to any private individual. John Howard had asked that no eulogistic sermon might be preached for him. His friend, Mr. Smith, was the only clergyman who obeyed the request, and thus disappointed an immense concourse of people who collected from all parts of Bedfordshire to listen. The five other sermons were biographical, and founded on the text, "He went about doing good."

John Howard asked for a sundial to be put

over his grave. A small brick memorial was erected instead, and is still shown by the poor unlearned people of that wild and unattractive region on the shores of the Black Sea as their rude but honest tribute to his worth.

Four miles from Cherson, and not far from the brick grave, there is also a metal obelisk to his memory. It stands on a square near the Church of the Assumption, and opposite an old prison at Dophinovka. Both tomb and obelisk bear inscriptions in Russian and Latin. At the centenary celebration of his death, a few years ago, the whole municipality and hundreds of people gathered to see funeral wreaths placed on these monuments by the civic authorities of Cherson. At the same time Divine service was held in the prison, and an annual feast-day appointed for the prisoners.

Besides Bacon's effigy in St. Paul's, another statue has lately been erected in Bedford. It stands in the midst of the market, under the shadow of the Collegiate and Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, where he attended service as Sheriff. His quick, active feet must often have crossed that spot, for his weekly walk on Sunday led him past it. It is a representative effigy more than a faithful likeness, though the face is copied from a "token" or frank issued by Howard himself. The sculptor Gilbert describes his ideal in the following words: "I have represented him in the attitude of thought. I have clothed him in the travelling dress of the time. I have placed a symbolical fountain underneath. *All are welcome.*"

The height of the statue is twenty-four feet

It is placed on an ornate pedestal, approached by five Portland stone steps. Bronze monsters peer out at each corner, bearing hooded and helmeted masks. Out of these falls water into the shell-like basin below. Each of these heads is supported by the outstretched arms of a winged figure with nude feet. Above rises a block of English marble, supported by rich and artistically coloured bronze tracery.

The statue is full of poetical symbolism. Its cost was £2,000, and it is a fit remembrance from the town of his choice. It bears the simple inscription :

JOHN HOWARD.

1726. 1790.

“Let me be forgotten” was the last uttered request of the dying reformer. John Howard, like his Divine Master, wished to make himself of no reputation; but it cannot be. He has written his name in large and indelible letters in the history of Europe and on the walls of every prison in the civilised world, and has left a lasting memorial in a reformed and humane system of prison discipline. The man who demanded that he might be permitted to spend a month as prisoner in one of the blood-stained chambers of the Inquisition at Valladolid, in order to see by experience what many victims were at that moment undergoing, can never be forgotten.

“Before his time prisons were the foci of the foulest of all foul diseases,” of idleness, of crime. Now they are centres of physical health, centres of industry, and schools of a new and better

life. An association to promote the objects John Howard advocated was formed in London, under the patronage of the late Lord Brougham. The philanthropist can never be forgotten whilst a body of scientific men are banded together to indoctrinate the public mind with the importance of a reformative and radically preventive treatment.

The plaster casts taken of his face after death may crumble away: his work can never do so. There are none of his own kith and kin to carry on his honoured name, but the world recks nothing of that. Foremost in her annals one name is written in letters of gold, with the one prayer ever appended to it:

“ Let the sighing of the prisoner come before Thee.”

